DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 444 355 FL 026 344

AUTHOR	Gottlieb, Margo
TITLE	The Language Proficiency Handbook: A Practitioner's Guide to Instructional Assessment.
INSTITUTION	Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield. Evaluation and Assessment Section.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	84p.; An accompanying CD-ROM is included.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Bilingual Education; Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; *English (Second Language); *Evaluation Methods; *Language Tests; Preschool Education; Preschool Tests; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; State Standards; Worksheets
IDENTIFIERS	Illinois

ABSTRACT

This guide is useful for pre-kindergarten educators who work with second language students who wish to document their students' language development over time. Although the purposes may vary among various practitioners and audiences, overall this handbook is intended to provide guidance in how to capture students' language proficiency in reliable and valid ways through instructional assessment activities. This handbook is built around a series of rubrics that serve as documentation forms for varied methods of assessment. The rubrics, representing holistic scales and focused-analytic matrices, cover four basic areas of language proficiency: listening; speaking; reading, and writing. Whenever possible, the connection between language and content is made. The instructional assessment ideas described suggest pathways towards second language learners' attainment of Illinois state English language learning goals: reading with understanding and fluency; writing to communicate for a variety of purposes; listening and speaking effectively in a variety of situations; and using the target language to communicate within and beyond the classroom to reinforce knowledge and skills across academic, vocational, and technical disciplines. To this end, each section/rubric contains the following: an overview and theoretical background; ideas for obtaining information; procedures on collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information; student samples with analyses; peer and self-assessments; student or class reporting forms; and caveats and suggestions. A glossary is appended. (Contains 13 references.) (KFT)

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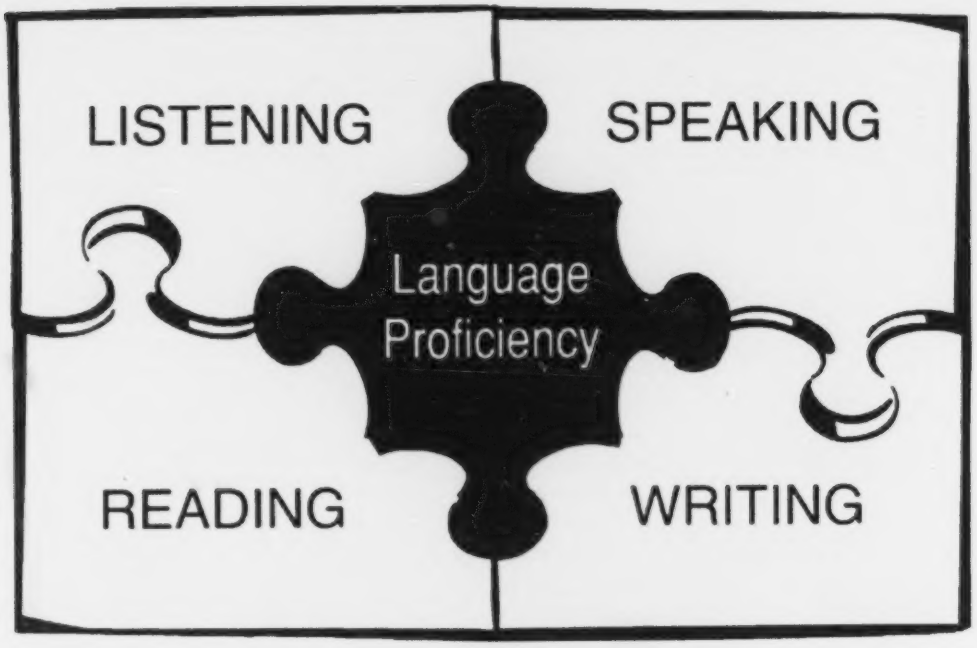
The Language Proficiency Handbook

A Practitioner's Guide to Instructional Assessment



Illinois State Board of Education
Assessment Division

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Acknowledgements

Dear Reader:

The creation of the Language Proficiency Handbook: A Practitioner's Guide to Instructional Assessment (hereafter, the Language Proficiency Handbook) has been a team effort, and all the persons involved in that process are to be recognized for their contributions. For two years, the Language Proficiency Committee of the Bilingual Assessment Advisory Panel wrestled with issues and explored ideas related to the construct of language proficiency and its implications for instructional assessment. It was responsible for the development of the conceptual outline and the selection of rubrics.

The following is the core group of dedicated individuals who constituted the Language Proficiency Committee:

Raj Balu	School District #299	Chicago
David Barker	School District #207	Des Plaines
Jaime Castellano	Palmetto Elementary School	West Palm Beach, FL
Pat Chamberlain	School District #U-46	Elgin
Carmen da Costa	School District #299	Chicago
Christine Ewy	Education Consultant	Palatine
Margo Gottlieb	Illinois Resource Center	Des Plaines
Harriet Herrera	School District #59	Arlington Heights
Marlene Kamm	School District #73	Skokie
Cindy Valenciano	Chicago State University	Chicago

The Illinois State Board of Education was both a collaborator and facilitator in the development of the Language Proficiency Handbook. The State Board's assistance was invaluable and its support for the project should be recognized. The following persons at the Illinois State Board of Education helped make this project a reality:

Xavier Botana	Merv Brennen
Carmen Chapman	John Daugherty
Anne Marie Fuhrig	Boon Lee

After two years of writing, reviewing, and rewriting, this document is ready to be shared with educators. Thanks to the Language Proficiency Committee and a cross-sectional group of preK-12 teachers who offered feedback midway through the process. Special thanks to Christine Ewy who carefully read the manuscript, provided some language samples and analyses, as well as offered valuable suggestions that were incorporated into the final version. For all those teachers who have waited so long for the Language Proficiency Handbook's release, thank you for your patience. Thanks everyone for all your help!

Sincerely,
Margo Gottlieb
Principal Writer

Introduction

Historical Background

In August 1993, Governor Edgar signed bill P.A. 88-192 that exempted any limited English proficient (LEP) student in a state approved bilingual education program from taking the state assessment for a period of three years. This legislation also established a "task force of concerned parents, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to assist in identifying alternative assessment programs." As a result of a year's work, five recommendations, along with a set of guiding principles, were presented and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

For the next two years, the Bilingual Assessment Advisory Panel formulated the conceptual frameworks for the assessments based on the recommendations while the Bilingual Oversight Committee dealt with policy issues. During this time, the outlines of three products emerged: 1. the *Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English (IMAGE)*; 2. *Illinois Content-based Exemplars*; and 3. the *Language Proficiency Handbook*. Together these three initiatives provide a full complement of assessment tools designed for second language learners that yield comprehensive information on students' language proficiency and academic achievement.

Audiences

This guide is useful for preK-12 educators who work with second language learners, irrespective of which language, who wish to document their students' language development over time. These educators include administrators, coordinators, counselors, classroom teachers, English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, bilingual education teachers, and modern (foreign) language teachers. Although the purposes may vary among different audiences, overall, the *Language Proficiency Handbook* is intended to provide guidance in how to capture students' language proficiency in reliable and valid ways through instructional assessment activities.

Students and family members are recognized contributors to the assessment process. Students are encouraged to engage in peer and self-assessment and to interact in their preferred language. Those with special needs may also become familiar with the rubrics, in particular, when strategies are employed specific to their disability.

Scope of the Handbook

The *Language Proficiency Handbook* is built around a series of rubrics that serve as documentation forms for varied methods of assessment. The rubrics, representing holistic scales and focused-analytic matrices, cover four areas of language proficiency: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Whenever possible, the connection between language and content is made. The instructional assessment ideas described suggest pathways towards second language learners' attainment of the following Illinois Learning Standards:

- English Language Arts, State Goal 1 (Read with understanding and fluency);
- English Language Arts, State Goal 3 (Write to communicate for a variety of purposes);
- English Language Arts, State Goal 4 (Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations)

- Foreign Languages, State Goal 28 (Use the target language to communicate within and beyond the classroom setting); and
- Foreign Languages, State Goal 30 (Use the target language to make connections and reinforce knowledge and skills across academic, vocational, and technical disciplines).

In addition, the many suggestions outlined in the procedures offer ways of measuring the attainment of the national ESL pre-K-12 standards (TESOL,1997).

Each section highlights a rubric that can be considered one source of information in the evaluation of student learning. A rubric, by defining the criteria for student performance, provides a uniform and consistent means of collecting, recording, interpreting, and reporting assessment information. It is advisable to start small, selecting one rubric to use with language development tasks or integrated language and content projects. Teachers should choose the rubric that matches their identified purpose and their student population, and that delineates criteria that match the program of instruction. If that rubric happens to be a matrix, the initial focus should be on one component or aspect of the scale at a time, until familiarity is gained with practice and use.

Uses for the *Handbook*

There are a variety of uses, each one tied to a selected underlying purpose for assessment. Ultimately, it is a **local** decision how, and to what extent, the *Language Proficiency Handbook* is to be implemented. The more high stakes the assessment, such as for accountability at the school or district level, the more secure the assessment and the better trained the teachers must be in the use of the rubric in order to obtain reliable and valid results. Specifically,

1. For **administrators**, the rubrics suggest measurable indicators for select Learning Standards useful for documenting local assessment and school improvement efforts.

2. For **teachers**, the *Language Proficiency Handbook* is a tool for designing and applying instructional assessment to the classroom and for collaborating with other teachers.

3. For **students**, it serves as a means for accruing evidence of their language development and for reflecting upon their growth in language proficiency over time.

Unique Features

The *Language Proficiency Handbook* is designed to facilitate the instructional assessment of students and to incorporate instruction into the assessment practices of teachers. To this end, the following features are highlighted:

1. **Instructional assessment ideas**, which are applicable to diverse instructional settings (including multi-age, resource, team, or self-contained classrooms) and grouping patterns (such as whole group, small group, triads, or pairs) of students;

2. **Rubrics**, which provide a common format and a uniform set of descriptors for interpreting student performance, enhancing the reliability of the assessment and allowing for greater communication and understanding among teachers, students, and family members;

3. **Ongoing instructional assessment**, which provides students with specific feedback from teachers and peers regarding their performance and allows them to build on their strengths while assuming increasing responsibility for learning;

4. **Peer and/or self-assessment** which encourages students to focus and think about what they have done and to monitor their own progress.

Limitations

As no one measure constitutes assessment, neither can a single publication capture its complexities.

Several limitations of the *Language Proficiency Handbook* are recognized here and ways in which teachers, schools, and districts can compensate for these shortcomings are suggested.

1. Ideally, there should be an accompanying cassette or CD-ROM with oral samples of students conversing, storytelling, problem solving, and reading. A video of students engaging in activities and responding to the language around them is another viable option. Although acceptable, it is less authentic to assess indirectly through written transcripts of students' oral activities, as is the case of the *Language Proficiency Handbook*. In conjunction with the rubrics, teachers and districts should consider maintaining an individual cassette of each student to document progress over time.

2. Along with the criteria for assessment expressed in each rubric, students need to see examples of student work that have been judged on those criteria. Only then will students be able to apply the criteria to their peers' work, move to independent self-assessment, and will teachers be able to interpret student work. One or two samples, as presented in this guide, are not sufficient. Teachers should draw from the pool of samples generated by their own students.

3. Student peer and self-assessments that appear in the *Language Proficiency Handbook* may be more beneficial if translated. Rubrics, written in English, may be better understood if the language is simplified for students and/or family members. Schools and districts are encouraged to modify the rubrics to best meet the needs of their student population.

4. As the Task Force recommended, the *Language Proficiency Handbook* should be coupled with professional development at the local level. Teachers and administrators should have opportunities to examine and explore ways of designing and implementing local assessment utilizing the rubrics.

Purpose and Organization

Instructional assessment implies a partnership between instruction (the delivery system) and assessment (the information-gathering process). Performance-based instructional activities, tasks, and projects form the basis for classroom assessment. The intent of this document is to present kernels of ideas that are to be elaborated by students and teachers to create a meaningful curriculum unique for their particular setting. The outline for each section, or rubric, in the *Language Proficiency Handbook* is as follows: (1) Overview and theoretical background; (2) Rubric; (3) Ideas for obtaining information; (4) Procedures on collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information; (5) Student samples with analyses; (6) Peer and self-assessment; (7) Student or class reporting forms; and (8) Caveats and suggestions.

It is hoped that the *Language Proficiency Handbook*, in recognizing the value of classroom assessment in educational decision making, will act as a catalyst for bridging instruction and assessment practices, ESL/bilingual and modern language education, and will be a force in promoting collaboration amongst educators.

Part I: Overview

A. Types of Rubrics, Language Areas, and Developmental Clusters

In the *Language Proficiency Handbook*, there is a balanced representation among two types of rubrics; four language areas that underlie language proficiency; and six developmental, or grade level, clusters. In the assessment of **listening (L), speaking (S), reading (R),** and **writing (W),** student performance can be interpreted with a holistic and/or focused-analytic rubric. Holistic scales are global in nature and represent the construct (in this case, a language area) as a single dimension. Focused-analytic scales, in contrast, are compartmentalized and depict the construct as the sum of its component parts. Besides the language area and developmental cluster, the selection of the type of rubric depends on the purpose for assessment, the audience, the context for assessment, and how the information is to be used. The chart below summarizes the types of rubrics, language areas, and developmental clusters.

Name of Rubric	Type of Rubric	Language Areas				Developmental Clusters
1. Stages of Second Language Acquisition	Holistic Rating Scale	**L**	**S**	R	W	All (Grades PreK-12)
2. Student Oral Language Observation Matrix	Focused-analytic Matrix	L	**S**	R	W	All (Grades PreK-12)
3. ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Modified Version	Focused-analytic Matrix	**L**	**S**	**R**	**W**	Middle/Junior High Early High School Late High School
4. Early Reading Rubric	Holistic Rating Scale	L	S	**R**	W	Pre-Kindergarten Early & Late Elementary Middle/Junior High Early High School
5. A Reading Rubric for Local Assessment	Focused-analytic Matrix	L	S	**R**	W	Late Elementary Middle/Junior High Early & Late High School
6. *Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English* Writing Summary Rubric	Focused-analytic Matrix	L	S	R	**W**	Late Elementary Middle/Junior High Early & Late High School
7. Composition Profile	Focused-analytic Matrix	L	S	R	**W**	Middle/Junior High School Early & Late High School

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B. Considerations in Planning Assessment: Questions to Ponder

1. Why assess?

In answering the question, identify the purpose for assessment and the language areas to be assessed (listening, speaking, reading and/or writing), and then formulate a plan, such as the matrix that follows, to document student learning (the who, what, where, when, and how).

2. For whom is the assessment designed?

Every student is a language learner. Although the focus of the *Language Proficiency Handbook* is on second language learners, it provides ways of documenting oral language and literacy development applicable for all students. Ultimately, the instructional assessment tasks and rubrics must be appropriate for the students and broad enough in scope to cover the full range of proficiencies represented in the student population.

3. What is the level of implementation for the assessment?

The *Language Proficiency Handbook* complements state assessment, offering districts and schools a variety of assessment options. Its primary target is the classroom level, where teachers have substantial latitude in using the material. It may be utilized, however, at the program, school, or district levels as part of local assessment. If used for accountability purposes, uniform guidelines for administration and sustained professional development are necessary to ensure reliable and valid results.

4. How does the assessment (including the rubric) match instructional practices?

The delivery of instruction and assessment should be identical in terms of the types of materials accessed, the grouping and interaction of students, the language(s) used, and the techniques employed. In classrooms, that means the conditions for instruction and assessment should be identical.

5. How does the assessment reflect the curriculum?

Assessment has to mirror the curriculum if it is to be a valid account of what students know and are able to do. The underlying assumption is that the curriculum is built on the experiences of the students, is relevant to the lives of the students, and is representative of the students' developmental level.

6. Which Illinois Learning Standards are to be assessed?

If assessment is an expression of the curriculum and the curriculum, in turn, maximizes the opportunity for students to attain designated Illinois Learning Standards, there is continuity in the education program for students. Anchoring curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the Learning Standards increase the validity of the educational program. The English Language Arts and Advisory Foreign Language Learning Standards are the most logical places to begin alignment.

7. What are the instructional resources to be utilized in the assessment?

Whatever resources are utilized for instruction should be part of assessment as well. Students should be encouraged to experiment with real objects in order to test their hypotheses and to figure solutions to problems. The use of concrete instructional resources facilitates students' construction of meaning.

8. How, when, and by whom is the assessment to be administered?

The answer to this question is dependent on the purpose for the assessment, the frequency of assessment, the stakeholders, and the level of implementation. The higher the level of implementation (such as a district), the more secure the assessment must be and the more standardized the administration. There is more flexibility in the classroom where the stakes are not as high.

9. How are the results going to be reported?

The manner in which the assessment information is to be imparted needs to be considered. It is strongly advised not to simply supply a number or a letter to denote a student's performance. Rather, the criteria in the rubrics should form the basis for reporting; sometimes, the rubric itself may serve as the reporting form. At the district level, where scores are aggregated from different schools, it is important to provide a context for assessment results.

10. With which audiences is the assessment information to be shared?

Student self-assessment and checklists in the *Language Proficiency Handbook* encourage the active participation of both students and family members in the assessment process. Rubrics with technical language should be part of the school culture, to be shared amongst teachers and administrators. Multiple perspectives should always be represented in student assessment.

The following matrix may serve as a guide in preparing for language proficiency assessment.

Language Areas	**Why?**	**Who?**	**What?**	**When?**	**Which?**	**How?**
LISTENING						
SPEAKING						
READING						
WRITING						

C. Why Assess? Purposes for Language Proficiency Assessment

General Purposes

1. Contribute to school or district accountability for students' annual growth in listening, speaking, reading and writing by providing summary information

2. Determine eligibility and placement of students in support services as a result of initial screening in first and/or second languages *(Support services include, but are not limited to, bilingual education, ESL, Title I, and special education.)*

3. Monitor progress by
   a. documenting individual student's language proficiency over time
   b. having students engage in self-reflection or self-assessment
   c. ascertaining the extent to which Learning Standards are being attained
   d. evaluating support services or language programs

4. Reclassify students within or transition students from support services

5. Follow students after transitioning from support services

6. Inform and modify instruction to meet the changing needs of students

7. Promote articulation and communication among teachers and parents through the use of common reporting forms

8. Apply rubrics reflective of language development to student performance in order to obtain reliable, valid, and useful information for educational decision-making

Specific Purposes Within a Bilingual Setting

1. Determine a student's relative language proficiency by comparing performance in one language to that in a second language

2. Obtain a composite profile of a student's dual language proficiency

3. Document a student's use of two languages in social and/or academic situations

4. Evaluate the effectiveness of dual language or developmental bilingual programs

D. Selection of a Rubric

The following checklist lists features to consider in the selection of a rubric. It is intended to assist teachers and administrators in choosing the most appropriate rubric to use in language proficiency assessment. This set of questions may also apply to the rubrics used to document academic achievement.

The Rubric	Yes	No
1. Is it aligned with a specified purpose for assessment?		
2. Is it aligned with select Learning Standards?		
3. Is it aligned with the curriculum?		
4. Is it useful across multiple grade levels?		
5. Is it applicable across multiple instructional contexts and settings?		
6. Does it lend itself to the use of multiple instructional strategies?		
7. Does it allow students to express themselves through multiple modalities?		
8. Does it capture the key elements and domains of language proficiency or key concepts of the content area?		
9. Does it represent the full range of the students' language proficiency or academic performance?		
10. Does its criteria describe what students can do?		
11. Are the criteria useful to students, parents, and teachers?		
12. Is it conducive or adaptable to student self-assessment?		
13. Could it positively affect how teachers teach?		
14. Could it positively affect how students learn?		
15. Is it fair and equitable for all students with whom it will be used?		

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E. Student Language Samples

The language samples in the *Language Proficiency Handbook* are generic in nature and do not include information on the students or the context for data collection. There are several reasons for not providing extensive background information. First, the samples, for the most part, are applicable across multiple grade and developmental levels. The rubrics have the identical set of criteria, irrespective of a student's age and personal history. Second, there is great heterogeneity in regard to student characteristics, such as first language and culture, years of educational experience, exposure to the second language, and educational continuity. The *Language Proficiency Handbook* attempts to represent a broad spectrum of students. The focus is on student performance rather than the individual factors, which may influence the performance. Third, there is a tremendous variation in the types of instructional services offered second language learners. The intent here is to present instructional assessment strategies and student samples that are useful in a wide range of ESL, bilingual, and modern language classrooms.

Oral and written samples, collected systematically over the school year, provide teachers and students insight into how and to what extent students are gaining language proficiency. The assignment of a student to a performance level on a rubric should be based on multiple language samples. In addition, there is a unique combination of individual and instructional factors for each student, classroom, school, and school district that should be taken into consideration in language proficiency assessment. Classroom, ESL, bilingual, and modern language teachers should be aware of the variables associated with second language acquisition. Student background information, coupled with the language samples, provides a comprehensive picture of student performance.

The language samples presented in this guide are intended to assist teachers in analyzing and interpreting the assessment of second language learners. In addition, the samples illustrate the utility of specific instructional assessment methods associated with a particular rubric. Story retelling and a teacher/student interview are the methods selected for oral language assessment. *Mourka, The Mighty Cat* by Jane Andrews Hyndman was the stimulus used for story retelling. Samples from a journal entry, the Social Science Illinois Content-based Exemplar on Immigration Stories, and a fictional story are the methods used for assessing reading and writing. The interview and journal entry are purposely repeated so teachers gain a sense of how different scoring criteria, represented by two rubrics, produce unique interpretations of the same piece of student work.

Part II: Rubrics and Ideas for Implementation

A. Listening and Speaking Rubrics

1. Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Overview

This holistic scale provides a general description of the second language acquisition process in the areas of listening comprehension and speaking. Several criteria for student performance are associated with each stage of language proficiency that assumes a cumulative progression of attainment along a developmental continuum. The five stages are (1) Preproduction, (2) Early Production, (3) Speech Emergence, (4) Intermediate Fluency, and (5) Developed Speaker.

Theoretical Background for the Scale

The rubric reflects the generally accepted sequence of second language acquisition delineated by Krashen & Terrell (1983), and by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982). Five hypotheses are offered to explain the second language acquisition process. The Natural Order Hypothesis states that there is predictability in the acquisition of grammatical structures. In the Monitor Hypothesis, conscious learning serves as a monitor or editor for language acquisition. The Input Hypothesis assumes that acquisition occurs when the language contains elements just beyond the students' level of performance. The Affective Filter Hypothesis recognizes the role of affect (personality, motivation, and self-confidence) in language acquisition. The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis differentiates unconscious from conscious effort on the part of students exposed to a new language. In summary, research suggests that acquisition sequences are strikingly similar across language and cultural groups; thus, the rubric has broad applicability.

Guidelines for Use

This scale or rubric is a global indicator of oral language proficiency. Its summary information for each stage of language acquisition allows teachers working with second language learners to become knowledgeable of the expectations for student performance in regard to their oral language development. The rubric is applicable to students of all ages, from young children to adults, who are acquiring a second language.

Assignment of a stage or level should be based on accumulated evidence of a student's listening comprehension and oral language production over time gathered from a variety of contexts. Therefore, individual, paired, or small group instructional activities may all contribute to a student's overall language proficiency level. The varying contexts should include opportunities for students to express themselves in both social and academic situations.

The Class Summary Sheet enables oral language proficiency information for a group of second language learners to be available for teachers throughout the academic year.

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Student: _____ Date: _____

Grade Level: _____ Language of instruction and assessment: _____

Teacher: _____

Based on the student's interactions with you and others, mark the stage of listening comprehension and speaking.

Stage	Pre-production I	Early Production II	Speech Emergence III	Intermediate Fluency IV	Developed Speaker V
Language Area **LISTENING COMPREHENSION**	• Begins to understand, often with repetition, what is said • Begins to associate sound and meaning and build a receptive vocabulary • Begins to develop listening and comprehension strategies, i.e., uses contextual clues • Begins to understand the main idea by focusing on key words • Begins to understand oral directions by pointing to an object or picture	• Continues to gain understanding of what is said • Continues to focus on key words • Continues to develop listening and comprehension strategies with contextual cues • Follows a few simple oral directions	• Understands most of what is said in general conversation • Continues to develop listening strategies by comprehending more than key words • Continues to develop lexicon, maintaining a larger receptive than productive vocabulary • Struggles with abstract concepts and academically demanding tasks • Exhibits difficulty understanding nuances of the second language • Follows multi-step directions	• Understands most of what is said in academic settings • Continues to have difficulty understanding abstract concepts in completing academic tasks • Continues to develop vocabulary and increases productive vocabulary • Uses listening strategies with less reliance on contextual clues • Continues to develop more implicit comprehension but not able to completely comprehend the subtle nuances	• Fully understands what is said in both academic and social settings • Understands abstract concepts in completing academic tasks • Uses listening strategies similar to first language peers • Exhibits receptive vocabulary comparable to first language peers
Language Area **SPEAKING**	• Says isolated words or phrases • Repeats short phrases • Relies exclusively on first language for communication	• Says a few simple words or short phrases • Responds to most questions with one word responses, e.g., yes/no, who, what, when, where • Produces some two-word strings	• Uses longer phrases, often producing whole sentences • Speaks with some hesitancy, e.g. has gaps and errors in vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and/or pronunciation • Responds and interacts in conversations including class discussion	• Speaks fluently, e.g., has infrequent gaps and errors in vocabulary, grammar, and syntax which do not affect meaning • Responds with full sentences and connected narrative • Continues to have some difficulty expressing abstract concepts or completing academically demanding tasks	• Speaks in academic and social settings commensurate with first language peers • Speaks fluently using both formal and informal language e.g., has command of slang and other more subtle language of peers • Expresses abstract concepts in completing academic tasks

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Ideas for Obtaining Information on Listening Comprehension

These suggestions are intended for teachers, assistants, volunteers, older buddies, or grade level peers who are proficient in the second language. See the other rubrics in this section for additional ideas to promote and assess the students' oral language development.

1. *Read aloud a story, a newspaper article, or information from the internet. Emphasize the key elements of a story: the who, what, where, when, how, and why.*
   Have the students
   - identify the main characters by pointing, labeling, or responding orally;
   - describe the setting by illustrating or writing a list of descriptors;
   - sequence the events by illustrating or by numbering story cards, pictures, or simple sentences in order of occurrence;
   - develop or use a graphic organizer that matches the story grammar.

2. *Give single or multiple step directions in which language and content are integrated.*
   Have the students
   - carry out the command through physical action (for example, trace a route on a map or a model);
   - follow the directions by role playing or writing the sequence;
   - make recipe cards and illustrate the steps;
   - repeat the instructions to a peer.

3. *Describe a task or an activity or show a video of a natural event.*
   Have the students
   - construct a replica;
   - design a mural;
   - conduct an experiment;
   - make a photojournal;
   - create a collage;
   - complete maps, charts, and/or tables.

4. *Plan a class mini-lesson which centers on the use of listening strategies or emphasizes listening comprehension.*
   Have the students
   - write about the experience in their journals in their preferred language (L1 or L2);
   - create a product or physical representation of a central idea;
   - recreate the piece by producing text and illustrations.

5. *Provide experiences in technology through movies, cassettes, radio, television, photography, videography, and the computer.*
   Have the students
   - record information, using a graphic organizer;
   - recreate the experience, using another medium;
   - summarize the information by listing important points;
   - sort vocabulary into logical categories;
   - react and reflect on what they have learned.

Procedures for Planning, Collecting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Information on the Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Planning

1. Use any of the Ideas for Obtaining Information as a starting point for collecting information on students' listening and/or speaking proficiency. Select a topic or theme to embed these ideas with other instructional strategies with which the students are familiar.
2. Depend on classroom routines to obtain additional information on oral language proficiency. These routines, as well as observation of students in other settings around the school, provide the basis for determining a student's oral language proficiency in social contexts. Information gathered within content area instruction serves as an indicator of a student's academic language proficiency.

Collecting

3. Spend time daily "kid watching" and listening to students interact with each other. Consider making a vertical file from index cards of the students, in alphabetical order, on a clip board. Jot down individual student use of language, the language of communication, and any memorable expressions. Record the date for each observation, the context, and the setting. This running record provides ongoing anecdotal information on each student's language proficiency.
4. Gather oral language proficiency data in varied settings, under varied conditions, such as observing the interaction among individuals, pairs, or small groups of students.

Analyzing

5. Match observations and other evidence with the descriptors of language acquisition. Using the rubric's criteria as a guide, choose the Language Acquisition Stage that is most representative of the student's proficiency in listening and/or speaking throughout the designated time frame. Highlight the criteria attained by each student and place the rubrics, in alphabetical order, in a class folder.
6. Record the Stage of Language Acquisition (from 1 to 5) for listening and speaking for each student on the Class Summary Sheet. Be sure to note the period of time it covers on top. The Class Summary Sheet allows teachers to see the various stages of language proficiency represented by the group of students.

Interpreting

7. In general, do not refer to a numeral, such as that associated with a Stage of Language Acquisition, as a student's oral language proficiency level. Instead, specify the rubric's criteria that the student has exhibited in repeated observations.
8. Use the information regarding the students' oral language proficiency level or stage to plan instruction, provide feedback to the students, document student progress over the academic year, and collaborate with other teachers.

Oral Language Sample

Context: "The Mighty Cat" was one of the stories used in the ESL class. We discussed the book for a week, and a the end of the week Guillermo related the story to me.

"The Mighty Cat"

A peddla started going around the veellage and Marca (Mourka) stayed behind and he saw a big mice and a skinny mice and he started eating them all. Den they were no more food so he started eating keem (cream) and all the people's food.

And on Sunday everybody went to church . . . well a lady didn't want to go to church because she might think her food might be eaten next. She said that one of her piece a chicken was left on the back yard.

And den everybody started hiding in their housed . . . and then this lady told Marca—Stop tef! And everybody chased him and he ran into the forest. And the fox came and Marca the mighty cat said, I am Marca the mighty cat and the fox said he went to tell all the other animals . . . and the animals started and giving him a party. And he thought they were saying more but he, he said we better leave before he eats us.

Den there were more mouse and the country and they said if Marca were right they'd give him more food—so they went looking for him back and they lived with everyone else.

Analysis of an Oral Language Sample

Method of Assessment: Story Retelling
Rubric: Stages of Second Language Acquisition
Stimulus: *Mourka, The Mighty Cat* by Jane Andrews Hyndman

LISTENING Level of Language Proficiency: Stage V Developed
SPEAKING Level of Language Proficiency: Stage IV Intermediate Fluency

Overall, this student is communicating ideas in line with the story grammar and conveying the meaning of this narrative tale. The student's expression, however, is not commensurate with that of a native English speaking peer due to subtle inaccuracies. Therefore, in terms of speech production, the student cannot be considered a Developed Speaker (Stage V). The student does appear to have comprehension of the concepts and story events. In assessing listening or receptive knowledge, the student's global understanding of the narration would be considered Developed (Stage V).

Three criteria constitute the Intermediate Fluency stage. The oral language sample is analyzed based on each criteria to derive the holistic rating. In this case, fluency is assessed indirectly as a recording of the student's speech is unavailable.

Criteria: Speaks fluently; has infrequent gaps and errors in vocabulary, grammar, and syntax which do not affect meaning

There appears to be little hesitancy in the flow of ideas. One of the strategies this student uses to transition and connect thoughts is the word "and" at the beginning of sentences. Some grammatical and syntactic errors, common to second language learners, are noticeable such as,"he saw a big mice and a skinny mice," one of her piece a chicken," and "they went looking for him back." The meaning is somewhat obscured by these errors, however, the story line is conveyed.

Criteria: Responds with full sentences and connected narrative

The student consistently uses compound and complex sentences of varying length. A variety of connectors that link two ideas, such as "so," "because" and "but," are present. The sentences all contain descriptive information. The discourse follows a logical pattern and there is clearly a beginning, middle, and end to the story.

Criteria: Continues to have some difficulty expressing abstract concepts or completing academically demanding tasks

The student, for the most part, conveys the key concepts of this story. The speaking strategies the student exhibits in the choice of vocabulary appear to capture the story's main ideas. The cat and mice problem is defined early on. In the conclusion, the issue is resolved after the party in the forest with the other animals. The cause and effect relationship between the cat and the mice, central to the story, is not fully explained.

Class Summary Sheet for Stages of Second Language Acquisition

For each quarter (or marking period), indicate each student's language proficiency in listening and speaking. Write the numeral that corresponds to the stage of second language acquisition the student has reached based on classroom language production tasks matched with the rubric's criteria.

Teacher: _____ Year: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language: _____

Stages of Second Language Acquisition:

	Pre-production	Early Production	Speech Emergence	Intermediate Fluency	Developed Speaker
LISTENING (L) COMPREHENSION	I	II	III	IV	V
SPEAKING (S)	I	II	III	IV	V

Time Frame:	1st Quarter		2nd Quarter		3rd Quarter		4th Quarter	
Language Area	**L**	**S**	**L**	**S**	**L**	**S**	**L**	**S**
Student:								
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								
9.								
10.								
11.								
12.								

Cautions in the Use of the Stages of Second Language Acquisition and Suggestions on How to Avoid Pitfalls

Cautions	Suggestions
1. It is a one-dimensional scale that provides only a global indication of a student's oral language proficiency.	1. Never consider only one scale or measure for student assessment and educational decision-making. This rubric is one form of documentation; use it in combination with other assessment information.
2. Its general nature does not lend itself to diagnostic use.	2. Use the scale for initial screening to gain a general understanding of where a student lies on the language acquisition continuum. Then, have the assessment hone in on a specific language component (such as in SOLOM) or language function (such as in Proficiency Guidelines) to obtain more detailed information.
3. Being a five-point scale, there may temptation to convert the levels to grades. Under NO circumstances, however, is this scale intended to be a means of evaluating the content of student work.	3. Use the rubric for instructional planning as it delineates the parameters in which a student is able to operate in a second language. It may also be a communication tool to share among classroom teachers.
4. Within each stage, there is a substantial range of student performance. That is, students' oral language proficiency varies considerably within the acquisition process.	4. With each stage, decide which descriptors are associated with the beginning of the range and which are more reflective of the latter part of the range. Have student examples at varying points along the continuum to guide your analysis. This strategy will yield more consistent results as well as facilitate articulation among teachers, parents, and students.
5. The rubric's criteria are associated with the social dimensions of language proficiency.	5. Select this rubric to become familiar with indicators of the language acquisition process. The rubric may be particularly useful when analyzing the language of concepts already familiar to the students.

A. Listening and Speaking Rubrics

2. Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM)

Overview

The SOLOM was originally developed in California in 1978 to supplement standardized assessments of language proficiency and has been widely disseminated since 1985. Since its introduction, several variations have been produced based on the matrix template. It has five dimensions or components for rating key aspects of language proficiency: (1) comprehension; (2) fluency; (3) vocabulary; (4) pronunciation; and (5) grammar and five levels of language proficiency, from least to most proficient (1-5). Thus, 25 cells are formed in the matrix. Within each cell, there is a set of criteria descriptive of the designated developmental stage.

Theoretical Background for the Scale

The SOLOM is built on the assumption that the most beneficial language environment is one where language is used in natural contexts for communication and where the learner is focused on understanding or expressing an idea, message, or thought. According to Dulay, Burt, & Krashen (1982), language acquisition is recognized as a developmental process. The natural order hypothesis recognizes that, in general, certain linguistic patterns tend to be acquired early and others late by all second language learners, irrespective of their home language.

Guidelines for Use

Classroom teachers should preferably wait several weeks until they are familiar with their students prior to using the rubric. Therefore, the SOLOM may not be appropriate for initial placement upon a student's entry into a school or school district. Instead, it should serve as one of many indicators for monitoring student progress and in determining a student's reclassification status. It is suggested that SOLOM be incorporated into a teacher's instructional routine and utilized on a systematic basis, such at the close of each marking period.

The language the student produces or a given oral language sample is the assessment while the SOLOM, or another rubric, provides the interpretation for that assessment. The rubric enables teachers to pinpoint areas of student strength in oral language in social and/or academic settings. The easiest way of documenting student oral language development is to stamp the date across the student level attained for each of the components for a given assessment task or time frame. That way, one matrix can be maintained per student for the entire year.

In planning language proficiency assessment, it is important to be aware of its purpose and use. The most authentic natural way of capturing oral language is by "kid watching" or observation. This form may not be reliable, however, as a standard procedure is not followed and there is no concrete evidence to link with the criteria. A structured interview or story retelling task represents the other end of the continuum. There is consistency in the data collection method and there is a record of the event; however, the spontaneity of language production is lost. In the final analysis, students should have many opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency with the assignment of a language proficiency level based on a variety of assessment methods.

SOLOM Teacher Observation
Student Oral Language Observation Matrix

Student: _____ Date: _____

Grade Level: _____ Language Observed: _____

Social Domain: ☐ Academic Domain: ☐

Based on observation, for each of the five components at the left, mark an "X" or write the date across the box which typically describes the student's performance.

	1	2	3	4	5
A. Comprehension	Cannot understand even simple conversation.	Has great difficulty following what is said. Can comprehend only "social conversation" spoken slowly and with frequent repetitions.	Understands most of what is said at slower-than-normal speed with repetitions.	Understands nearly everything at normal speed although occasional repetition may be necessary.	Understands everyday conversation and normal classroom discussions without difficulty.
B. Fluency	Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible.	Usually hesitant; often forced into silence by language limitations.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussions frequently disrupted by the student's search for the correct manner of expression.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussions generally fluent, with occasional lapses while the student searches for the correct manner of expression.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussions fluent and effortless, approximately that of a native speaker.
C. Vocabulary	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible.	Misuse of words and very limited vocabulary: comprehension quite difficult.	Student frequently uses the wrong words; conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.	Student occasionally uses inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies.	Use of vocabulary and idioms approximate that of a native speaker.
D. Pronunciation	Pronunciation problems so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.	Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems. Must frequently repeat in order to make himself or herself understood.	Pronunciation problems necessitate concentration on the part of the listener and occasionally lead to misunderstanding.	Always intelligible, though one is conscious of a definite accent and occasional inappropriate intonation patterns.	Pronunciation and intonation approximate that of a native speaker.
E. Grammar	Errors in grammar and word-order so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.	Grammar and word-order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase and/or restrict himself or herself to basic patterns.	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word-order which occasionally obscure meaning.	Occasionally makes grammatical and/or word-order errors which do not obscure meaning.	Grammatical usage and word-order approximate that of a native speaker.

Ideas for Assessment of Oral Language Proficiency

The ideas for instructional assessment inside the classroom are categorized by the components of the rubric. The ideas for use outside the classroom are general in nature.

Inside the Classroom

COMPREHENSION
- Have pairs of students engage in two-way tasks (where each student only has half the information and the partner has to figure it out through questioning).
- Have students describe a series of photographs or pictures.
- Have students explain charts or graphs.

FLUENCY
- Have students explain a multi-step process to a small group of peers.
- Have students restate what has been said or read.

VOCABULARY
- Have students describe an object, person, or event.
- Brainstorm ideas with students about a topic and have students create and explain a web, Venn diagram, or other graphic organizer.
- Have students discuss what they know about a topic or theme.

PRONUNCIATION
- Create a communication center (equipped with a cassette player, head phones, and tapes, books in many languages, a computer and software, for example) where students are encouraged to listen and speak.
- Maintain a cassette of a student's speech throughout the year.

GRAMMAR
- Have students conference on a regular basis with teachers or other models.
- Have students discuss what they have learned.
- Direct students to use different time frames when speaking.

Outside the Classroom

- Visit the school's library, learning center, or gym and listen to student interactions.
- Converse with students in the hallways about their personal experiences.
- Attend the school's special events and discuss them with your students.
- Engage students in conversations on the playground or in the lunchroom.
- Listen to students when they talk about their interests, preferences, or choices and ask them relevant questions which draw from their life experiences.

Procedures for Planning, Collecting, Analyzing, and Interpreting *Information on* SOLOM

Planning

1. Become familiar with the criteria for each of the components of the rubric and their corresponding levels of language acquisition.
2. Choose a specific setting or a routine instructional activity requiring student interaction that will serve as the source for data collection (see the SOLOM Ideas).
3. Consider making double, color-coded copies of the rubric: one for ESL/bilingual teacher and one for the classroom teacher.

Collecting

4. Keep a running record or anecdotal information on individual student interaction patterns. Use postits and attach them to the student's rubric or take notes on an individual student's index card.
5. Periodically, have students record their conversations and/or other oral language activities on individual cassettes. Make sure they give their names, the date, and the circumstances for taping.
6. Have older students complete their self-assessment of listening and speaking at the close of each marking period. Explain each component and give students examples from data collected from their peers.

Analyzing

7. Listen to the student language sample; if you choose, transcribe it. Coupled with the anecdotal information, match the sample to the proficiency levels for each component on the SOLOM. Select the cell (box) which exemplifies the student's performance level and mark it with an X or stamp it with the date.
8. Mark the Context (Social or Academic) for assessment on the rubric. The Social Context refers to the students' everyday experiences inside and outside of school; the Academic Context refers to content-related, classroom activities.
9. Work with a team of ESL, bilingual, and classroom teachers in rating the student samples. Share cassette tapes and anecdotal data of students. Match the criteria on the rubric to the student oral samples.

Interpreting

10. Continue to meet with other teachers in assigning proficiency levels. Choose student samples which represent each proficiency level (1-5) and each component (comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation) by age/grade clusters.
11. Within the group of teachers, reach consensus (at least 85% agreement) on the scoring components by discussing the attributes of each sample. These samples can then serve as examples or anchors for future judgements.
12. If so desired, group students with similar characteristics (such as years of educational experience, years of ESL/bilingual support, home language, for example) and compare their levels of language proficiency.
13. Use the information gained from assessment to plan professional development activities about the language acquisition process, language proficiency assessment, and planning instructional strategies.
14. Consider the contribution of observation in the systematic collection and analysis of oral language proficiency data and student self-assessment information to the total assessment information.

Oral Language Sample

Context: As part of assessment for placement purposes, the teacher informally chatted with the student.

Teacher: *Aris, would you tell me your full name, please.*

Student: Aris

Teacher: *Okay. How old are you?*

Student: I'm fifteen years old.

Teacher: *What country are you from?*

Student: I'm from Yugoslavia.

Teacher: *How long have you been in the United States?*

Student: I have been here—uh—for nine months—11 months.

Teacher: *Okay. Do you remember your first day at High School?*

Student: Yes, I do.

Teacher: *I'm sure you will always remember that. Will you tell me about the first day? What was it like?*

Student: It was like—You take us—You show is—You take us all over the school and you show us where are our classrooms and you take us to the library and you teach us how to—to take book from the library an' all that.

Teacher: *How did you feel that first day? Do you remember?*

Student: Hmmmmm. I feel—nervous.

Teacher: *I'm sure. Not so nervous now though, right?*

Student: Now, no.

Teacher: *No. You seem very comfortable here. How is High School different from your school in Yugoslavia?*

Student: Well, it's shorter than my country. Ya know there's—there's not many periods than like as in my country. Then the language—the reading, the writing—an' the people.

Analysis of an Oral Language Sample

Method of Assessment: Interview
Rubric: Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM)
Domain: Social

SPEAKING Level of Language Proficiency
The teacher relies on an informal interview, rather than solely observation, to assess the student's listening and speaking in everyday, social situations. In general, the student demonstrates greater listening comprehension (component A) than oral production (components B-D).

Comprehension: Level 4
Criteria: Understands nearly everything at normal speech, although occasional repetition may be necessary.

The student responds appropriately in all but one instance. In the beginning, the student did not produce his full name as requested.

Fluency: Level 3
Criteria: Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion frequently disrupted by the student's search for the correct manner of expression.

The majority of the responses, especially those outside of routine questions, appear halting. The student pauses to retrieve a word in English (such as "I feel...nervous"), self-correct ("for 9 months...eleven months"), or refocus ("It was like...you take us"). These hesitancies impede the flow of speech.

Vocabulary: Level 3
Criteria: Student frequently uses the wrong words; conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.

An improper phrase is evident in the response "shorter than my country" in describing how high school is different here. However, in the student's elaboration, it is obvious the student was referring to a "shorter" length of time in class. The vocabulary the student uses is confined to common, everyday expressions and is quite rudimentary in its degree of sophistication and technicality.

Pronunciation:
This component cannot be assessed without listening to actual speech production. Features of language associated with pronunciation, such as tone, pitch, intonation, and register can only be assessed from direct oral samples.

Grammar: Level 2
Criteria: Grammar and word order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase and/or restrict himself to basic patterns.

There are grammatical errors, such as "there's not many periods than like as in my country," but the meaning is not impeded. This student's responses are confined to the present tense; this pattern is most noticeable when the student is describing his first day of high school. During the frequent stops and starts, the student repeats a word or rewords a phrase such as "it was like...you take us...you show us."

Student Self-Assessment of Listening and Speaking

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language: _____
Teacher: _____

How would you rate yourself as a listener and speaker? Rate yourself from 1 (a beginner) to 5 (an expert) on how you listen and speak your second language. For outside of class, think about the language you use in the hallways or lunchroom and then mark the box. For in class, think about the language you use in Math, Science, and Social Studies before marking the box.

MY RATING	Beginner		Intermediate		Expert
	1	2	3	4	5
COMPREHENSION (understanding when people speak)					
• Outside of class					
• In class					
FLUENCY (speaking smoothly without hesitating)					
• Outside of class					
• In class					
VOCABULARY (understanding and using specific words)					
• Outside of class					
• In class					
PRONUNCIATION (saying the words clearly)					
• Outside of class					
• In class					
GRAMMAR (using the rules of the language)					
• Outside of class					
• In class					

Student Oral Language Summary Profile Using SOLOM

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language of instruction and assessment: _____
Teacher: _____

Rating of students is based on direct observation or a tape of oral language tasks or activities. Transpose the numeral, from 1 to 5, from the rubric that corresponds to the student's performance for each component. Sum the component scores to arrive at a total score.

Date:										
Activity or Task:										
Component Comprehension (1-5)										
Fluency (1-5)										
Vocabulary (1-5)										
Pronunciation (1-5)										
Grammar (1-5)										
Total Score (25)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Cautions in the Use of the SOLOM and Suggestions on How to Avoid the Pitfalls

Cautions	Suggestions
1. Each cell of the matrix has a minimal set of criteria. Each level, from 1 to 5, is defined by one or two phrases, making it open to broad interpretation.	1. Teachers who plan to use the SOLOM should meet to discuss the differences in proficiency levels for each of the language components. Clarify or further specify the criteria and consider developing an overall or summary descriptor for each level (1- 5).
2. It may be difficult to obtain spontaneous language samples from students.	2. Plan some specific oral language activities which produce a variety of responses or design an oral journal with your class where every student has entries on a cassette.
3. It is assumed that each of the five components of oral language, as identified in the matrix, is of equal value and importance.	3. Modify the SOLOM to best reflect instruction. For example, in your classroom, if Comprehension is considered more important than Pronunciation, count it two or three times as much.
4. The SOLOM, in its original form, does not specify academic language proficiency associated with particular content areas.	4. A box designated Academic Domain has been added at the top of the rubric. When assessment occurs in Science, Social Science, Health or Math, and students are communicating ideas from those learning areas, check the academic box and write the content area(s) covered.
5. It is a five-point scale. As with any odd numbered rubric, the tendency is to rate around the midpoint.	5. Teachers need to make clear-cut distinctions between each level which may be accomplished by compiling a collection of student samples. Remember that in a five-point scale, each level represents about a 20% range in oral language proficiency.
6. As the matrix contains 25 cells, it might be a challenge for teachers to establish inter-rater agreement on students' oral language proficiency. For school or district-level assessment, a higher level of agreement (probably 85% or greater) is necessary than at classroom/grade level.	6. At the start of the school year, the group of teachers using the SOLOM should pool language samples collected from their students. For each age/grade cluster, the samples should be rated using the rubric. These rated samples can be used throughout the year as anchors in the assessment process.
7. The rubric does not address the complexity, variety, amount, or creativity of language production.	7. In conjunction with the SOLOM, anecdotal information on these features should be noted for each student.

A. Listening and Speaking Rubrics

3. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines Modified Rubric

Overview

The Proficiency Guidelines have a long history in the field of modern language education. Oral proficiency descriptions were first devised by the Foreign Service Institute to measure adults' language functioning in diplomatic or business assignments abroad. In 1983, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Educational Testing Service created speaking categories that apply to foreign language teaching at the secondary level; in 1986, descriptions for the other language areas were developed. This version, adapted to students acquiring English as a second language, attempts to cover the upper-elementary level as well. It includes a parallel set of criteria for the four language areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ACTFL is currently revising the 1989 Guidelines as well as developing Proficiency Guidelines for K-12 Learners.

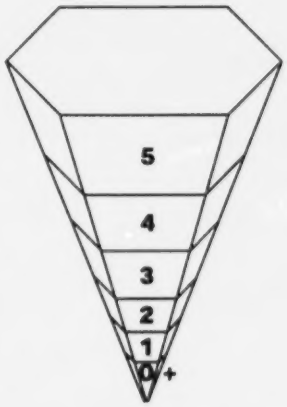
Theoretical Background for the Scale

In this holistic scale, language proficiency is viewed as an inverted pyramid with function (language use), context, and form (grammatical patterns) serving as the cornerstones. Five proficiency levels are seen as layers upward from the tip of the pyramid (see the figure below). Initial acquisition of language is represented at the lowest level or floor, followed by a gradual broadening of increased proficiency until the ceiling is reached. In general, the Proficiency Guidelines recognize the integrated nature of language.

Guidelines for Use

The original intent of the *Proficiency Guidelines* was to have trained interviewers elicit speech by engaging individual candidates in casual, but carefully structured, conversations. The interview was the sole format used to determine a student's overall performance with a global oral proficiency rating assigned based on the criteria at designated proficiency level.

In its current form, the rubric has been simplified in two ways: (1) subcategories of proficiency levels have been eliminated and (2) the criteria have been classified as form or function. It is designed for ESL, bilingual, and modern language teachers in middle and high schools for any second language. Planning should be based, in part, on student self-assessment of language functions associated with listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing.



Inverted pyramid of language proficiency (Lowe, 1987)

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Modified Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language: _____
Teacher: _____

For each language area, mark the level according to the student's use of functions and forms.

LISTENING

Level	Functions	Forms
Novice	• Understands high-frequency social conventions • Understands some words and phrases from simple questions, statements, commands, and social courtesies	• Understands words, phrases, and some sentences • Understands speech at a slow rate with periodic repetitions
Intermediate	• Understands face-to-face listening tasks • Understands short, routine telephone conversations • Understands simple announcements and reports over the media	• Understands sentences and some connected discourse • Understands conversation inconsistently
Advanced	• Understands topics pertaining to different times and places on TV and radio • Understands main ideas and most details on a variety of topics	• Shows an emerging awareness of culturally implied meanings • Understands speech in a standard dialect
Superior	• Understands main ideas of all speech, including academic concepts • Follows extended complex speech in lectures, speeches, and reports	• Follows extended complex discourse • Understands organizational structure of the oral text
Distinguished	• Understands all forms and styles of speech in personal, social, and academic situations • Understands plays, dramas, editorials, academic debates, literary readings, and most jokes or puns	• Understands colloquial speech • Understands strong cultural references in speech • Understands formal, decontextualized language

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Modified Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language: _____
Teacher: _____

SPEAKING

Level	Functions	Forms
Novice	• Expresses basic courtesies • Handles elementary needs • Asks simple questions • Makes statements	• Uses some basic vocabulary such as objects, places, and family terms • Produces isolated words, phrases, or short sentences • Shows some signs of spontaneity • Has frequent errors
Intermediate	• Handles limited interactive, task-oriented, and social situations • Talks simply about self and family members • Participates in short conversations about personal history and leisure-time activities • Asks and answers questions	• Uses vocabulary to express the most elementary needs • Combines and recombines elements with some connected discourse • Hesitates and pauses, causing strained fluency • Pronounces often with first language influence • Communicates meaning in conversations
Advanced	• Narrates and describes with connected discourse • Satisfies requirements of everyday situations and school routines • Elaborates, complains, apologizes • Discusses topics of personal and current interest • Uses communicative strategies such as paraphrasing	• Generally shows fluency and ease of speech • Links sentences together smoothly • Uses vocabulary to communicate finer shades of meaning
Superior	• Participates in informal and formal conversations on practical, social, academic, and abstract topics • Supports opinions and hypothesizes using native-like strategies	• Produces some sporadic errors but no patterns of errors, are evident • Uses technical, low-frequency vocabulary

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Modified Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language: _____
Teacher: _____

READING

Level	Functions	Forms
Novice	• Interprets environmental print such as items on menus, schedules, maps, timetables, and signs • Interprets contextualized written language in areas of practical need • Reads for instructional or directional purposes with familiar vocabulary	• Recognizes the symbols of the writing system • Identifies highly contextualized words and/or phrases
Intermediate	• Reads short descriptions of persons, places, and things and some narration • Reads simple, connected texts dealing with basic and social needs	• Understands linguistically non-complex texts • Understands some main ideas and information • Struggles with matching pronouns with referents
Advanced	• Reads a variety of texts including simple short stories, news items, bibliographic information, personal correspondence, and simple academic material • Begins to understand literary texts	• Reads prose of several paragraphs in length with familiar sentence patterns • Grasps main ideas but misses some details • Understands conceptually abstract and linguistically complex texts • Makes appropriate inferences
Superior	• Reads texts that feature hypotheses, argumentation, and supported opinions • Understands literary texts, editorials, correspondence, general reports, and academic material • Reads expository prose on unfamiliar topics	• Understands grammatical patterns and vocabulary of academic reading • Reads with almost complete comprehension and at normal speed
Distinguished	• Follows unpredictable turns of thought and author intent in culturally specific novels, plays, poems, and subject matter • Reads most styles and forms related to academic needs • Applies inferences in text to real-world knowledge	• Understands writer's use of nuance and subtlety • Reads fluently and accurately most styles and forms of academic language • Understands sociolinguistic and cultural references

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Modified Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language: _____
Teacher: _____

WRITING

Level	Functions	Forms
Novice	• Writes simple fixed expressions • Supplies information on simple forms and documents • Writes names, numbers, dates, and other simple biographical information • Writes some short phrases and simples lists	• Forms letters in an alphabetic system • Copies familiar words or phrases from memory • Shows evidence of developmental spelling
Intermediate	• Writes short messages, statements, simple letters, personal and school experiences • Creates statements or questions with familiar language • Takes notes in some detail on familiar topics • Meets a number of practical writing needs	• Expresses present time consistently • Creates a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments • Produces inconsistent grammatical forms
Advanced	• Describes and narrates facts in paragraphs • Writes simple social correspondence, cohesive summaries, and topics of personal interest	• Has control of common word order patterns but has difficulty with complex sentences • Has an emerging sense of organization • Has some style features that may be obviously non-native
Superior	• Expresses self in most formal and informal writing on practical, social, and academic topics • Writes letters, short research papers, and statements of position • Presents arguments and points of view	• Has control of a range of structures, spelling, and a wide general vocabulary • Has organization that includes chronological ordering, cause and effect, comparison, and thematic development

Procedures for Planning, Collecting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Information on the Proficiency Guidelines

Planning

1. Select the language area(s) to assess (listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing). Become familiar with the form and function criteria.
2. Introduce the selected language area to the students. Older students, in particular, should be familiar with the criteria by which they are to be judged. Later, the rubric can be used during teacher/student conferences.
3. Decide which instructional activities or tasks lend themselves to measuring the acquisition of language functions. Those which are interactive and performance-based, involving everyday social situations in and out of school, allow students to demonstrate how they use language.
4. Be knowledgeable of the range of language proficiency of your students. Plan activities with the students accordingly, based on their experiential backgrounds and interests. At the same time, make the activities challenging to motivate the students to stretch and reach for the next proficiency level.

Collecting

5. For the areas of listening and speaking, consider devoting time (towards the end of each marking period) for short, individual conferences to assess students and to give them feedback. Devise several familiar scenarios and incorporate questions, requests, descriptions, or explanations (depending on the proficiency level targeted and the functions to be assessed) of varying difficulty for the students. Be sure to start and end with easy tasks so the students will have some success.
6. For the areas of reading and writing, group activities or tasks may be planned. If it is part of your instructional routine to use cooperative learning, then do so for assessment as well. In this way, instruction and assessment strategies will match.

Analyzing

7. Match the results from the assessment with the descriptions or criteria stated in the rubric. Transfer the proficiency level onto the **Proficiency Guidelines Student Summary Sheet.** Maintain one **Summary Sheet** per student throughout the year. A stamp with the date could be used for the matrix, giving information in a glance as to a student's annual progress.
8. Have students monitor their progress with the **Self-Assessment Rating Scale**, concentrating on one language area at a time. The students may compare their analysis with that of a peer. Use the student self-assessments as an additional source of information.

Interpreting

9. Have students compare the results obtained from the **Proficiency Guidelines Self-Assessment Rating Scale** with those of the **Proficiency Guidelines.** Debrief with students what they have accomplished in their second language. Consider student self-assessment as an additional source of information when evaluating their proficiency.
10. Use the information on oral language and literacy development to help students plan ways to improve their performance and to assist teachers in planning or modifying instruction.
11. To the extent feasible, have the students maintain a language proficiency portfolio with a cassette of oral language and reading samples as well as writing entries. The **Student Summary Sheet** may serve as a cover page; it may be duplicated for student and teacher use so an ongoing record of student performance may be kept.

Oral Language Sample

Context: As part of assessment for placement purposes, the teacher informally chatted with the student.

Teacher: *Aris, would you tell me your full name, please.*

Student: Aris

Teacher: *Okay. How old are you?*

Student: I'm fifteen years old.

Teacher: *What country are you from?*

Student: I'm from Yugoslavia.

Teacher: *How long have you been in the United States?*

Student: I have been here—uh—for nine months—11 months.

Teacher: *Okay. Do you remember your first day at High School?*

Student: Yes, I do.

Teacher: *I'm sure you will always remember that. Will you tell me about the first day? What was it like?*

Student: It was like—You take us—You show is—You take us all over the school and you show us where are our classrooms and you take us to the library and you teach us how to—to take book from the library an' all that.

Teacher: *How did you feel that first day? Do you remember?*

Student: Hmmmmm. I feel—nervous.

Teacher: *I'm sure. Not so nervous now though, right?*

Student: Now, no.

Teacher: *No. You seem very comfortable here. How is High School different from your school in Yugoslavia?*

Student: Well, it's shorter than my country. Ya know there's—there's not many periods than like as in my country. Then the language—the reading, the writing—an' the people.

Analysis of an Oral Language Sample

Method of Assessment: Interview
Rubric: Proficiency Guidelines Modified Rubric

SPEAKING Level of Language Proficiency: Novice

Characteristic of a novice speaker, this student exhibits minimal communicative strength when faced with survival questions pertaining to school. The sample indicates that the student has progressed beyond isolated words and phrases, yet is unable to sustain interaction, a requirement at the Intermediate level.

Function: Handles elementary needs.

The student is able to respond to simple, direct sentences. As soon as a more elaborate response within a social situation is required, communication breaks down and the student struggles to combine phrases.

Function: Makes statements.

The student can produce short, precise statements in response to survival questions. He is able to provide basic, personal information when requested, such as his name, country of origin, and length of stay in the United States.

Form: Shows some signs of spontaneity.

Given the scenario that a teacher is asking all the questions to a student in an interview situation, spontaneity does not appear obvious on the part of the interviewee. Opportunities should be given, as part of assessment, for the student to ask questions as well.

Form: Vocabulary centers on areas such as basic objects, places, and most common kinship terms.

The student's choice of words centers on familiar, everyday school objects such as "classrooms," "library" and "book." In reference to places, the student speaks of his "country."

Form: Has frequent errors.

Every extended sentence has a grammatical, syntactic, and/or lexical error. Examples of errors include incorrect tense, improper word use, and omission of articles.

Writing Sample

Context: The student was informed ahead of time that this entry was to be used for assessment. It is one piece of information the teacher collects for monitoring student progress.

April 18, 1989

The night is getting fatal. Yesterday, I had a dream, it was scared. I can't think about my dream but I'm sure that it makes wake me up every minutes. If the curtain is opened, it feels like someone is weaving even he or she smiles at me. I have to close the curtain so I don't have see them. When I was doing my homework. I saw something was in the back side. It was from the closet. It was just bunch of hanging clothes. If I'm tired there's no scared things because I fall in sleep. But when do my homework or study I get scared. Maybe I have seen a lot of scared movies like "Night Mare". Next time I'll watch comedy programs.

Analysis of a Written Language Sample

Method of Assessment: Journal Entry
Rubric: Proficiency Guidelines Modified Rubric

WRITING Level of Language Proficiency: Intermediate

The student is able to produce a series of original sentences that are loosely connected and topically related. The writing communicates an event that is more extensive than a simple message or note. There is variation in language patterns without a consistent use of tense. In addition, the writer is able to communicate her feelings to the audience. The writing sample can be further analyzed in terms of the most commonly used functions and forms .

Function: Meets a number of practical writing needs.

An ample writing sample reveals this student's fear of nightmares and what she has done to provoke them. Her ability to express this emotion demonstrates that her writing has reached a stage where she is comfortable taking some risks with the language.

Function: Writes short, simple statements about personal or school experiences, daily routine, and everyday events.

This narrative describes what happened to the student the night before. There are some short sentences interspersed with more extended and complex ones. In this area, the writer appears to be at the high range of the Intermediate level. It seems, for example, that the student's "ability to describe and narrate in paragraphs is emerging," which corresponds to the next level.

Form: Expresses present time (or one other time frame or aspect) consistently.

Several tenses are used in the entry. Present tense and past tense are rather interwoven with the past marked by rather consistent use of "was" and "saw". The writer has begun experimenting with other tenses as well, as is evident by the present perfect, "I have seen," and the future, "I'll watch."

Form: Creates a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments and provides little evidence of conscious organization.

The sentences, in general, are thematically linked around the writer's nightmare experience and the connected thought is apparent. Here is another instance where the student seems to be advancing to the next stage. At the Intermediate level, the criteria states, "writing, though faulty, is generally comprehensible." The faultiness in this sample appears to be the student's struggle with the appropriate lexical choice. It is the lack of precise vocabulary such as "the night is getting fatal," "I fall in sleep" and "scared movies" that somewhat obscures the meaning of the message.

Proficiency Guidelines: A Self-Assessment of Listening

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language(s): _____
Teacher: _____ _____

Think about how you use language. Decide how well you can do what is asked in your second language. Write a 2 in the box that describes how well you can do what is asked in your second language: *Not so well, OK, Quite well, or Really well.* For ESL/bilingual students, put a 1 in the box that describes how well you use your first language.

When LISTENING, I can understand:	Not so well	OK	Quite well	Really well
• Simple questions				
• What people say				
• What people ask me to do				
• Polite expressions				
• Telephone conversations				
• Announcements				
• News on TV				
• The main idea of what is said				
• Science, Social Studies, and Math words				
• What teachers say in class				
• Oral reports my classmates give				
• A speech given by an adult				
• Idiomatic expressions				
• Plays				
• Music				
• Someone's opinion				
• Jokes and puns				
• Someone reading aloud				

Proficiency Guidelines: A Self-Assessment of Speaking

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language(s): _____
Teacher: _____ _____

Think about how you use language. Decide how well you can do what is asked in your second language. Write a 2 in the box that describes how well you can do what is asked in your second language: *Not so well, OK, Quite well, or Really well.* For ESL/bilingual students, put a 1 in the box that describes how well you use your first language.

When SPEAKING, I can:	Not so well	OK	Quite well	Really well
• Ask questions				
• Answer questions				
• Introduce myself				
• Make a request				
• Talk about myself				
• Talk about my family				
• Apologize when I do something wrong				
• Complain when something is not right				
• Tell a story				
• Describe something				
• Tell the facts about an event				
• Discuss something of personal or public interest				
• Support someone's opinions				
• Explain in detail				
• Express what could happen				
• Participate in formal conversations				
• Discuss school subjects—Science, Social Studies, and Math				

Proficiency Guidelines: A Self-Assessment of Reading

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language(s): _____
Teacher: _____

Think about how you use language. Decide how well you can do what is asked in your second language. Write a 2 in the box that describes how well you can do what is asked in your second language: *Not so well, OK, Quite well, or Really well.* For ESL/bilingual students, put a 1 in the box that describes how well you use your first language.

I can READ:	Not so well	OK	Quite well	Really well
• Menus from restaurants				
• School schedules				
• Timetables (such as bus or train)				
• Maps				
• Signs				
• Short biographies (stories about people's lives)				
• Newspapers				
• Magazine articles				
• Letters from friends				
• Short stories				
• Poetry				
• Reports				
• Math, Social Studies, and Science textbooks				
• Novels and literature				
• Plays				
• Brochures and pamphlets				
• Information on the computer				

Proficiency Guidelines: A Self-Assessment of Writing

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language(s): _____
Teacher: _____

Think about how you use language. Decide how well you can do what is asked in your second language. Write a 2 in the box that describes how well you can do what is asked in your second language: *Not so well, OK, Quite well, or Really well.* For ESL/bilingual students, put a 1 in the box that describes how well you use your first language.

I can WRITE:	Not so well	OK	Quite well	Really well
• Information on forms				
• Shopping lists				
• Short messages				
• Postcards				
• Notes from what I know				
• Letters to friends				
• My daily schedule				
• Answers to personal questions				
• Summaries of what I hear or read				
• Descriptions of what has happened to me				
• Notes in Science, Social Studies, and Math class				
• Outlines from textbooks				
• Stories				
• Persuasive pieces (convincing someone of my opinion)				
• Short research papers				

Proficiency Guidelines: Student Summary Sheet

Student: _____ Year: _____
Grade Level: _____ Language of instruction and assessment: _____
Teacher: _____ _____

Match the student's performance with the criteria outlined in the rubric for the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing. Mark or stamp the date in the box that corresponds to the student's language proficiency level, from beginning to superior for speaking and writing, and from beginning to distinguished for listening and reading.

Assessment Tasks or Projects: **Date:**

1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____

	Proficiency Level				
Language Area	**Novice**	**Intermediate**	**Advanced**	**Superior**	**Distinguished**
Listening					
Speaking					
Reading					
Writing					

Cautions in Use of the Proficiency Guidelines and Suggestions on How to Avoid Pitfalls

Cautions	Suggestions
1. The scale was neither designed nor intended for young children. It has been modified and adapted from an adult version.	1. Use this scale with middle, junior high, and high school students. The use of forms and functions for instructional assessment, however, can apply to students at the preprimary and primary levels.
2. The difference between proficiency levels (from 0 to 5) is not equal. As you move up the scale, the amount of knowledge and skill that goes into raising a proficiency level grows exponentially.	2. Be aware of the parameters of each level. Make adjustments in the scale to meet your instructional needs. Share any modifications you make with your colleagues so if more than one teacher is using the rubric in your school, consistent information is collected.
3. The scale establishes identical criteria for the acquisition of any second language, including English. In some instances, such as dual language programs, the expected level of attainment is the same for both languages. In other cases, such as those prevalent at a typical high school, the language proficiency level of students acquiring ESL is expected to far exceed that of their counterparts acquiring a language other than English.	3. Create a peer tutoring program in your school so that all students acquiring a second language can use each other as linguistic and cultural resources. Or, have teachers team, combine an ESL class with a modern language class, and pair students for interactive tasks.
4. It is assumed that teachers using this scale are familiar with and have designed instructional activities or tasks based on language functions.	4. Select language functions and forms that can be easily incorporated into your instructional repertoire. Analyze familiar activities or tasks according to their forms and functions.

B. Reading Rubrics

1. Early Reading Rubric

Overview

This holistic rating scale has been adapted from a two-way immersion, Title VII Developmental Bilingual Education portfolio designed by a consortium of southern California school districts in the early 1990s. It was originally devised to capture the reading development process in two languages in young students. In this version, the criteria have been expanded to include any student who is acquiring reading proficiency, particularly, older students with limited formal schooling.

The rubric has six levels of reading proficiency with corresponding criteria that suggest how reading is acquired. Teachers are encouraged to observe the processes of reading in authentic ways in a variety of contexts and settings prior to assigning a descriptive, summary level to a student. As a level is based on accumulated evidence over time, an analysis of a single reading sample is not included in this section.

Theoretical Background

Reading is an interactive process that relies on the students' mental and physical engagement along with their knowledge of the world evoked by the literacy experience. Several factors need to be taken into account for students acquiring literacy in a second language. First, students possess varied oral language proficiencies in their second language. In addition, there will be varying degrees of the students' first language literacy that will influence their second language literacy development. A third consideration with second language learners is their varying amounts of prior knowledge and diverse educational backgrounds. Given these considerations, interactive models of reading are proposed for second language learners that are balanced in nature (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996).

Guidelines for Use

The scale is intended to provide some general criteria in the area of reading for students with little prior exposure to literacy experiences. It may be attached to a specific reading activity repeated throughout a designated time frame or be used to indicate a student's overall reading proficiency based on varied reading tasks. Information on a student's reading proficiency may be obtained in a first language (L1), a second language (L2), or both. This rubric may serve as a screening device for a more diagnostic reading measure or may be used in conjunction with a holistic writing scale to ascertain a student's overall literacy development.

Early Reading Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ First Language (L1): _____
Teacher: _____ Second Language (L2): _____

This rubric is designed for younger students, at the early elementary level, and for older students with limited formal schooling who are at the beginning stages of reading development. It may be applied to students who are becoming literate in their first language (L1), their second language (L2), or both. Circle the numeral(s) that describes the student's overall reading performance.

L1	L2	
1	1	**Pre-Reader** Looks at pictures and diagrams in books but does not make the connection to print. Watches and listens during reading. Begins to recognize letters and sounds in context as well as environmental print. Has limited literacy experiences.
2	2	**Emergent Reader** Understands the relationship between speech and the printed word. Sometimes memorizes and repeats oral language patterns. Begins to make the connection between letters and words. Recognizes some basic sight vocabulary.
3	3	**Developing Reader** Shows increasing confidence in reading familiar and predictable material independently. Understands and uses the sound/symbol correspondence to decipher words. Has increasing recognition of sight vocabulary in context. Begins to use strategies to gain meaning from print.
4	4	**Expanding Reader** Begins to read independently and constructs meaning from print. Makes predictions and connections of familiar content to real life situations with teacher guidance. Uses a growing number of strategies to gain meaning from print.
5	5	**Competent Reader** Approaches familiar material with confidence. Connects some academic concepts to personal experiences. Begins to draw inferences from books and stories with teacher support. Uses an array of strategies to derive meaning of the material.
6	6	**Strong Reader** Chooses from and uses a wide range of printed material, including texts and literature. Provides examples of abstract concepts and relates them to personal experiences. Makes predictions and draws inferences independently. Uses multiple and varied strategies to construct meaning.

Ideas for Obtaining Information for the Early Reading Rubric

Here are some ways of gathering information about students' reading. In assigning a reading level, match the information gained over a period of time against the rubric's criteria.

- Observe students reading in formal and informal situations
- Have students read aloud to each other in pairs
- Have students read along with Big Books, trade books, or chapter books
- Form Literature Circles with the students
- Have students maintain a Reading Response Log
- Conduct a miscue analysis as individual students read aloud
- Keep a Running Record of the students' reading progress
- Have students read aloud a language experience story they have dictated
- Have students read the environmental print around the school and neighborhood
- Have students discover familiar letters, words, and phrases in authentic reading materials, such as magazines, telephone books, and newspapers
- Have students brainstorm and predict what may happen in a story based on what they have read or what has been read to them
- Have students connect the story or information to their own lives and cultures
- Have students demonstrate their understanding of print and literacy by pointing, illustrating, role playing, or journaling in their first and/or second language
- Note the use of each student's reading strategies, such as in think-aloud, where students describe how they process the material
- Have students maintain individual cassette recordings of their oral reading and their responses to related comprehension questions

Student Strategies Demonstrated in the Acquisition of Reading

The following student strategies may be incorporated into reading instruction and noted in reading assessment. This list may be converted into a checklist to be used independently or to determine the level of strategic use that corresponds to the Early Reading Rubric.

Pre-Reader

- Holds and handles books properly
- Recognizes (left to right) directionality in reading
- Identifies pictographs and some environmental print

Emergent Reader

- Checks titles and authors
- Makes logical letter/sound connections
- Relies on memory and predictability to "read"
- Connects reading with speaking and writing

Developing Reader

- Uses illustrations or graphics to help construct meaning
- Makes self-corrections when reading orally
- Utilizes multiple cuing systems (semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic) when reading
- Locates words and phrases in text

Expanding Reader

- Applies first language and background experiences to enhance comprehension
- Reads bold print as a preview
- Uses context clues to infer meaning
- Observes punctuation when reading orally

Competent Reader

- Makes and verifies predictions
- Stops to summarize what has been read
- Uses sentence structure clues to infer meaning

Strong Reader

- Skims and scans material
- Rereads material as a self-check
- Synthesizes, interprets, and applies information gained through reading

Procedures for Planning, Collecting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Information on the Early Reading Rubric

Planning

1. Create a literacy-rich environment, with plenty of resources, where students have a lot of opportunities to read and be read to. Have a listening/reading center surrounded by books, a cassette player, headphones, and tapes for recording students' oral reading.

2. Find time to assess students during instruction as well as during a review of student work products.

Collecting

3. Try to maintain anecdotal notes on what individual students have accomplished, such as the reading strategies they use.

4. Record assessment information when students are working independently or in small groups, such as during Sustained Silent Reading (or Drop Everything and Read) time, reading workshops, or discussion circles.

5. Encourage students to talk to each other and with you about their reading, either informally or with planned conferences.

6. Periodically, have the students read into a cassette, listen to themselves reading and reflect upon how their reading changes throughout the year. Their oral reading of a passage along with their recorded reflection and response to teacher directed questions constitutes an oral language sample.

Analyzing

7. Based on the rubric's criteria, look for developmental trends and patterns in individual students over the year. These patterns should enrich a teacher's understanding of how the students are developing as readers.

8. Decide a student's level of reading performance based on processes and products, observational notes, and performance assessments collected over time matched against the criteria of the rubric.

Interpreting

9. Review assessment information on reading when meeting with other teachers to ensure articulation and consistency from year to year.

10. Discuss with other teachers and administrators the implications of students learning to read in two languages or those learning how to read in their first language prior to embarking in a second language. For younger students, use the Early Reading Checklist as a point of departure when conferencing with family members.

FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

Early Reading Rubric Checklist

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Story: _____
Family Member's Name: _____ _____

Here are some ways that children demonstrate their understanding of a story. Look at the list. Check what the child does when reading or being read to.

Yes	No	The child:
❑	❑	Looks at the pictures
❑	❑	Listens to the story
❑	❑	Follows the words in the book with a finger
❑	❑	Guesses what may happen in the story
❑	❑	Connects what happens in the story to personal experiences
❑	❑	Recognizes letters at the beginning, middle, and end of words
❑	❑	Sounds out or recognizes words
❑	❑	Repeats sentences from the story
❑	❑	Uses familiar words to help figure out an unfamiliar one
❑	❑	Names the main characters or people in the story
❑	❑	Tells where the story takes place
❑	❑	Tells when the story happened
❑	❑	Relates the main idea of the story
❑	❑	Describes what happens at the beginning, middle, and end of the story

Cautions in the Use of the Early Reading Rubric and Suggestions on How to Avoid Pitfalls

Cautions	Suggestions
1. The scale offers a general notion of reading proficiency. It does not capture all the salient criteria and skills in reading.	1. Use the scale in conjunction with other measures that are more focused on specific aspects of reading to obtain more diagnostic information about a student's reading performance.
2. This rubric is not designed for students who have acquired the fundamentals of reading proficiency.	2. Use this rubric as a developmental stepping stone for beginner readers.
3. Reading is not always an independent activity; it is often tied to writing.	3. For older students, this six-point scale may be linked with the six-point scale of the IMAGE Writing Summary Rubric to form a more comprehensive picture of a student's literacy development. Although the IMAGE rubric is designed for students in grade 3 and up, the Language Production component, which outlines the writing acquisition process, is more general and has greater applicability.
4. Reading is part of Social Science, Science, and Math instruction. In ESL and bilingual settings, language and content are often integrated.	4. Note on the rubric the context for assessment. Reading may be related to a theme, to literature, to a student's personal experience, or to a specified topic. Reading may be self-selected by the student or assigned by a teacher; it may be done independently, with partners, or in small groups. This information, if supplied on the rubric, will assist in informing instruction as well as assessing students.

B. Reading Rubrics

2. A Reading Rubric for Local Assessment

Overview

A Reading Rubric for Local Assessment was developed by a group of Illinois educators in collaboration with the Illinois State Board of Education in 1995 and was pilot-tested with narrative reading passages. The rubric serves as a link between assessment and instruction. The inclusion of this rubric in the Language Proficiency Handbook marks an effort to bridge literacy instruction and assessment of first and second language learners.

Theoretical Background

Reading is viewed as an active process which involves knowledge drawn explicitly and/or implicitly from a text, the use of critical thinking to focus on significant concepts, and the ability of the reader to make connections between what is read and real life experiences. These key components enable readers to construct their own representation of the reading matter. Comprehension results when readers integrate these components to create a meaningful whole.

Guidelines for Use

This rubric is designed for students who are comfortable reading familiar, experiential material. In its development, reading tasks were constructed for an on-demand assessment within a single class period without prior classroom discussion. This standard administration is recommended if the rubric is to be used for school or district assessment for accountability purposes. At the classroom level, where information is used to monitor student progress, instructional strategies and activities may be interwoven within the reading assessment over an extended amount of time.

For students acquiring a second language, response to reading selections may be communicated in writing or orally, thus emphasizing the interrelationships among all language areas. Whichever the medium, students are required to produce specific evidence from their reading, and their prior knowledge, including their personal experiences, are to be applied to what they read. Among the primary intents of this rubric is to document the students' use of critical thinking as part of their literacy development and to allow students opportunities to reflect on what they read. In constructing meaning, students are asked to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information.

The components of A Reading Rubric for Local Assessment (knowledge, critical thinking, and communication) correspond with those of the sample Illinois Social Studies Rubric (knowledge, reasoning, and communication) and the sample Illinois Math Rubric (knowledge, strategies, and explanation). These connections are helpful in determining the extent to which students are attaining designated Learning Standards. In addition, teachers are able to broaden the context for instruction and assessment by integrating language and content. Thus, reading is viewed as a central component for academic areas within an instructional program.

Reading Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____

Grade Level: _____ Language: _____

Social: ☐ Academic: ☐ Oral/Written Response: _____

Based on the student's performance, mark the score level for each component of reading.

Score Level	Knowledge of the Text	Significant Concepts	Making Connections	Communication
	Reader identifies information found explicitly and/or implicitly in the text.	Reader uses information from the text to focus on significant concepts through analysis, evaluation, inference, comparison/contrast.	Reader uses information from the text to make connections to other situations or contexts through analysis, evalutation, inference, comparsion/contrast.	Reader uses communication skills to focus and organize his/her ideas.
4	• Reader demonstrates substantial knowledge/ familiarity of significant textual concepts, themes, arguments, and/or literary elements as applicable. • Reader demonstrates an awareness of key ideas presented explicitly and implicitly (as appropriate). • Reader uses relevant and accurate references to the text.	• Reader demonstrates evidence of substantial critical thinking by presenting significant concepts logically and without gaps. • Reader uses relevant and accurate references to the text; most are specific and supported from the text.	• Reader demonstrates evidence of substantial critical thinking by making credible, balanced connections between the text and the reader's responses, predictions, or hypotheses. • Reader makes connections that are fully supported.	• Reader clearly expresses ideas. • Reader communicates in a well-focused, well-organized manner. • Reader demonstrates appropriate use of conventions.
3	• Reader demonstrates adequate knowledge/ familiarity of significant textual concepts, themes, arguments, and/or literary elements as applicable. • Reader demonstrates adequate awareness of key ideas presented explicitly and implicitly (as appropriate). • Reader uses relevant references to the text, but there may be gaps.	• Reader demonstrates strates evidence of some critical thinking by presenting significant concepts logically; there may be minor gaps. • Reader uses relevant references to the text; some may be general and/or not fully supported.	• Reader demonstrates evidence of some critical thinking by making credible, connections between the text and the reader's responses, predictions, or hypotheses. • Reader makes connections that are adequately supported.	• Reader adequately expresses ideas. • Reader communicates in a adequately-focused, adequately-organized manner. • Reader demonstrates adequate use of conventions.
2	• Reader demonstrates limited knowledge/ familiarity of significant textual concepts, themes, arguments, and/or literary elements. • Reader demonstrates limited awareness of key ideas presented explicitly and implicitly. • Reader uses references that are irrelevant, limited, and/or inaccurate.	• Reader demonstrates evidence of limited critical thinking. • Reader addresses some significant concepts but may not present them logically; there may major gaps. • Reader uses references that are limited, general, and/or inaccurate.	• Reader demonstrates evidence of limited critical thinking by making some connections between the text and the reader's responses, predictions, or hypotheses. • Reader makes connections that limited and/or partially supported.	• Reader expresses ideas that may be confusing. • Reader lacks focus and/or organization which may interfere with meaning or understanding. • Reader demonstrates a limited knowledge of conventions.
1	• Reader demonstrates little or no knowledge/ familiarity of significant textual concepts, themes, arguments, and/or literary elements. • Reader demonstrates little or no awareness of key ideas presented explicitly and implicitly. • Reader uses references that are irrelevant, confusing, or inaccurate. References may be absent. • Reader's response may be insufficient.	• Reader demonstrates evidence of little or no critical thinking. • Reader addresses few or no significant concepts or presents them illogically. • Reader uses no references or references that may be inaccurate. • Reader's response may be insufficient.	• Reader demonstrates evidence of little or no critical thinning. • Reader makes few or no connections between the text and his/her response, predictions, or hypotheses. • Reader makes connections that have little or no support. • Reader's response may be insufficient.	• Reader expresses ideas in a confusing manner. • Reader lacks focus and/or organizations which interferes with meaning. • Reader's uses of conventions may cause confusion. • Reader's response may be insufficient.
0	• Reader's response is insufficient or does not address task.	• Reader's response is insufficient or does not address task.	• Reader's response is insufficient or does not address task.	• Reader's response is insufficient or does not address task.

Ideas for Instructional Assessment of Reading

Students should select from a variety of activities, tasks, or projects depending on the amount of time available and the purpose for instruction and assessment. It is suggested to begin with activities that encompass familiar topics and experiences for the students and gradually expand the repertoire to include more abstract, academic concepts. Instructional assessment ideas are presented according to the four components of the rubric.

Knowledge of the Text

- Research information relevant to the reading topic or theme
- Summarize what is read by maintaining a reading journal
- Trace what a person or character has done and explain how s/he changes over time

Significant Concepts

- Analyze, compare, and evaluate different versions of fairy tales, for example (based on a cross-cultural perspective)
- Analyze, compare, and evaluate stories by the same author
- Integrate or synthesize information from various resources and come to a conclusion
- Make judgements or evaluate work, citing evidence from the information read
- Explain and provide reasons why a story would be considered fiction or non-fiction

Making Connections

- Analyze current events, school issues, and/or neighborhood concerns found in local newspapers
- Compare information obtained from the Internet to that reported in newspapers
- Apply and/or compare what is read to a personal experience
- Predict what a response might be to a question posed to a columnist and then compare the response to the actual one
- Decide how a story or event would have changed if the circumstances would have been different (time, setting, characters/persons, or sequence)

Communication

- Outline what is read using a graphic organizer
- Take a position on a controversial issue (presented as an editorial in a newspaper, for example) and defend it orally or in writing
- Organize and share information with a peer

Ideas for Instructional Assessment: Student Reading Response Log in Oral or Written Form

Here are some questions that pertain to each feature of A Reading Rubric. Depending on the type of reading material and the students with whom you are working, select those that are most appropriate. Introduce the students to the questions, one feature at a time. You may modify or translate the questions. The Log may be used to guide instruction or be included as part of student assessment.

Knowledge of the Text: Comprehension

1. What are one or two of the main ideas, issues, or problems you read? (Summarize the key points.)
2. Starting from the beginning, what are some of the important details? (Provide evidence that supports the main ideas.)
3. What conclusion do you reach based on all the information? Do you agree with the author's conclusion? Why or why not?

Significant Concepts: Analysis

1. What did you read that helped you reach your conclusion? Give specific examples.
2. How would you change the characters, events or setting? Why would you change them?

Making Connections: Application and Evaluation

1. What has happened in your life that is similar or different from what you read? Explain in detail or use a Venn diagram to illustrate your ideas.
2. What did you know before reading this piece that helped you understand what you read? In what ways were you able to relate or not relate to what you read?
3. What were you thinking as you read?
4. How is what you read alike or different from another piece with similar ideas or details?

Communication

1. In what ways do you show you understand what you read?
2. What details from your reading do you use to make your point?
3. What details from your own life do you use to make your point?

Procedures for Planning, Collecting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Information on A Reading Rubric for Local Assessment

Planning

1. Determine a match between the reading material and the features of the rubric. Based on the length of the selection, decide on the pacing of the reading and the associated activities.

2. For pre-reading, draw from the students' personal experiences and prior knowledge about the reading topic through brainstorming and/or questioning. Have students make predictions about what might occur. During reading, model and have students use a graphic organizer that applies to the selection and encourages higher-level thinking. For post-reading, develop a set pertinent questions to promote students' reasoning and thinking, such as
   - If you could be a character in this story, which one would you be? Why?
   - If you could talk to the author, what would you say?
   - If you could change the story in some way, what would you do?
   - How is this story alike or different from others you have read?
3. Have the students read the selection independently or in pairs.

Collecting

4. Ensure that the students understand the tasks and rubric criteria that will be used in the assessment. To the extent possible, show students multiple student examples that illustrate the rubric's features.
5. Decide on how students will respond and the language of their response, depending on their level of literacy and the purpose for the assessment. Allow students the options of recording their responses orally, writing, or illustrating them, or doing a multi-media presentation.

Analyzing

6. Match the results from the assessment with the criteria stated in the rubric. Students may engage in peer and/or self-assessment of their responses or product.
7. Provide feedback to students on the assessment based on the features of the scoring rubric. Consider having students edit their work and resubmit the final product.

Interpreting

8. Conference with the students over several days to clarify responses or to probe deeper. Discuss what they have accomplished in relation to the criteria in the rubric. Use the rubric and Reading Response Log to support your interpretation of their work and for students to set goals for reading.
9. Weigh the results of the assessment in relation to the students' proficiency, time on task, and opportunity to demonstrate the learning being measured.

Analysis of a Reading Sample

Method of Assessment: Writing in response to reading
Rubric: A Reading Rubric for Local Assessment
Context: As an on-demand assessment, the student read the complete story and then responded to the questions in writing.

Summary of the Story Read by Students

The plot of "The Snake Sitter" (1978, adapted from Parents Magazine) revolves around Linda, who wants to make money to buy her parents an anniversary gift. She and her friend, Ken, decide that pet-sitting would accomplish this goal. One of the pets turns out to be a rather large python snake. During the course of events, the snake escapes from his cage while Linda and Ken are chasing dogs and a cat which are also on the loose. Linda and Ken restore order and discover the python's hiding place in the piano before the owner returns to claim it.

Component: Knowledge of the Text
Score Level: 4

Linda thought pet-sitting would be a good, fast, easy way to earn money for her parents' anniversary gift. What happens in the story to make her realize that is wasn't easy as she thought it might be? Use information and examples from the story to explain your answer.

(The student's written responses are in italics.)

It wasn't easy for Linda to pet-sit pets once she tried to do it. When she got all the pets together, she couldn't believe it that she had to take care of 6 animals but at first, it was simple for her. Then, Ken thought he was suppose to bathe the cats, and when he put it back he left the cage open. The cat ran out of the cage, the dogs followed, and when Linda and Ken came back to the cages, they were muddy and dirty. Then the snake got loose, and crawled into the piano, and after searching for Herman, Linda and Ken found him. But they couldn't get him out, so they waited for the owner to get there, so the owner can get him out.

Analysis

The response demonstrates a substantial understanding of the important information needed to respond to the question. There are details that support the premise that pet-sitting is difficult work with specific evidence of implicit and explicit information from the text. For example, the sample indicates that "it was simple at first," which was not explicitly stated in the story.

Component: Significant Concepts
Score Level: 4

If Linda decided to pet-sit again, she would probably do some things differently. Give examples of the changes Linda would most likely make and explain why she would make these changes. Be sure to support your ideas with information and examples from the story.

She will probably found out what the pet is if she baby-sits again. If you are scared of that pet you should find out what it is. Also, she will probably leave the cats in the cage. If one of those cats gets out you better have the dogs tied up. Also I think she should have a little more help with the animals. So if she got more help each person should take care of that animal.

Analysis

This sample is a well-developed response that exhibits evidence of inference, analysis, and evaluation. Information from the text is used as evidence of what Linda would need to do to be a better pet-sitter. For example, it is stated that Linda might want to find out about the types of animals she was sitting beforehand in order to be better prepared. It is also inferred that Linda might be somewhat afraid of snakes which presumes some topic familiarity or background knowledge on the part of the reader.

Component: Making Connections
Score Level: 4

From what you have read about Linda and Ken, would you ask them to take care of your pet while you are on vacation? Why or why not? Use information and examples both from the story and your own experiences to support your answer.

No I wouldn't let them take care of my cat because I don't want it to get lost. Some of the pets got out of their cages when Ken and Linda were watching them and they almost didn't find Herman when he got away. Also my cat is very mean and no one can take care of it except my best friend Jessica. Even it my cat would let other people take care of it I wouldn't leave it with people I didn't know.

Analysis

The response shows evidence from the text to support the student's stance that no one could take care of her cat except her best friend. This reasoning is based on the student's personal experiences with a pet. Although in this case, the student has a pet, students without pets could form a position based on "if they had a pet." They could use information from friends, neighbors, relatives or even media about various pets to make their own connections.

Source: Chapman, C. (1997).

Cautions in the Use of A Reading Rubric for Local Assessment and Suggestions on How to Avoid Pitfalls

Cautions	Suggestions
1. This rubric has been designed and pilot tested on native English speakers.	1. The rubric may apply to instructional assessment in languages other than English and to comprehensible instruction in English.
2. Scores on reading comprehension, critical thinking, and communication may be unduly influenced by a student's writing proficiency, if writing is the only means of demonstrating comprehension	2. Students can express their understanding of what they have read and their use of critical thinking by responding orally (in L1 or L2), by writing in their first language, and supporting their verbal communication with illustrations, drama, or other non-verbal means.
3. Use of this rubric assumes that students can read independently.	3. Information may be obtained by using the rubric and having the selection read by an adult, peer, or tape, or read with a peer. Modifications should be noted on the rubric. Analysis and interpretation should distinguish assessment of reading from listening comprehension.
4. Use of this rubric assumes that critical thinking strategies have been incorporated into curriculum and instruction.	4. To see that assessment matches instruction, teachers can ask themselves: • Are students being asked to respond to *why* and *how* questions as opposed to *who* and *what* questions? • Are students required to provide evidence from the text to support their positions and demonstrate logical reasoning? • Are students being asked to critically read extended text and make meaningful connections?
5. Some reading passages lend themselves more readily to questions about Significant Concepts, while others are more appropriately targeted for implicit and explicit Knowledge of the Text.	5. Determine the match between the reading materials and the components of the rubric.

C. Writing Rubrics

1. *The Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English (IMAGE)* Writing Summary Rubric

Overview

The IMAGE Writing Summary Rubric was crafted in 1996 by Illinois educators, including English as a second language (ESL)/ bilingual education teachers and administrators, working in collaboration with the Illinois State Board of Education. It is a focused-analytic matrix used to guide students' and teachers' interpretation of student writing. The rubric is intended to capture the features unique to second language learners while dovetailing with those exemplified in *Write On! Illinois,* the state rubric designed for native English speaking students.

There are five components or dimensions to the rubric: (1) Language Production; (2) Focus; (3) Support/Elaboration; (4) Organization; and (5) Mechanics. The first four components have criteria or descriptors presented along six levels of a continuum while Mechanics has two levels of development. Focus, Support/Elaboration, and Organization parallel those in the state writing rubric. The Language Production component, developed specifically for this rubric, is reflective of the second language acquisition process. It includes elements of grammar that originally resided in the Conventions component of *Write On! Illinois,* renamed Mechanics in this rubric.

Theoretical Background

The Rating Guide for Functional Writing (Quellmalz, 1986) provides the conceptual basis for *Write On! Illinois* rubric which, in turn, overlaps with the *IMAGE* Writing Summary Rubric. Functional writing is defined as practical in nature, often typically used by students in their school work. The rubric accounts for direct writing of multiple modes of discourse or genres. Recently, the traditional modes of discourse have broadened to include description, exposition, narration, and persuasion. These genres are reflected in the state's writing assessment.

Guidelines for Use

This rubric can be applied to several writing contexts. It may be incorporated into process writing to help students understand and plan their writing over an extended period of time. The rubric may be helpful for peer or self-review after students have completed a first draft, a second draft, and/or the final or published version. The rubric may also be used to interpret on-demand student writing produced during practice sessions prior to the state assessment.

Being a complex and detailed rubric, it will take time to become familiar with all its criteria. It is suggested to begin with the Language Production component, as its levels correspond with the language acquisition process. The more expanded components (Focus, Support/Elaboration, and Organization for narrative, persuasive, and expository genres) are to be added gradually until familiarization is gained with the entire rubric.

As part of developing language proficiency, students need to acquire facility with various genres and have ample opportunities to write for varied audiences and purposes. Students' familiarity with myths, legends, adventures, biographies, folk and fairy tales leads to the development of narrative writing. Having students conduct opinion polls, critique forms of the media, write letters of complaint, and debate is practice for writing persuasive pieces. Finally, students' creating brochures and reports as well as conducting research will lead them to write expository themes.

There are several benefits of creating a uniform set of criteria throughout the state for writing assessment. First, the rubric has wide applicability, lending itself to classroom, school, district, and state accountability. The Language Production component displays second language learners' progress on a developmental pathway and promotes articulation of ESL/bilingual services with others of the educational program.

IMAGE Writing Summary Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Genre:: _____
Teacher: _____ Language:: _____

Language Production—*Degree to which English language acquisition is demonstrated in writing.*

1	2	3	4	5	6
• 1-2 word labels • Word lists	• Short, simple sentences or phrases attempted may be attempted	• Simple sentences; some expanded sentences attempted	• Expanded sentences; complex structures attempted	• Variety of sentence lengths and structures used	• Variety of sentence lengths and structures
	• Limited or repetitive sentence patterns attempted	• Limited or repetitive sentence patterns produced	• Variety of sentence patterns attempted	• Sentence patterns are appropriate for task	• Sentence patterns are appropriate for task
	• Frequent word order errors • Limited use accurate grammar	• Some word order errors • Some use of accurate grammar	• Occasional word order errors • Inconsistent use of accurate grammar	• Infrequent word order errors • Predominant use of accurate grammar	• Infrequent word order errors • Consistent use of accurate grammar
		• Frequent substitutions and omissions of words • Word choice predominantly nonspecific and/or repetitious	• Some substitutions and omissions of words • Appropriate use of high-frequency and limited use of topic-specific vocabulary	• Infrequent substitutions and omissions of words • Inconsistent use of idiomatic expressions or specific/technical vocabulary	• Infrequent substitutions and omissions of words • Appropriate use of idiomatic expressions or specific/technical vocabulary
	• Meaning may not be easily understood	• Some meaning may be obscured	• Overall meaning minimally obscured	• Overall meaning clearly communicated	• Overall meaning clearly communicated
• Some words from the native language may be present	• Some words from the native language may be present	• Some words from the native language may be present	• Predominant presence of second-language learner indicators	• Some presence of second-language learner indicators	• Minimal presence of second-language learner indicators

Focus—*Degree to which main idea/theme or point of view is clear and maintained*

1	2	3	4	5	6
• Absent; unclear; insufficient writing to ascertain maintenance	• Attempted; subject unclear or confusing; main point unclear or shifts; resembles brainstorming; insufficient writing to sustain issue • Multiple list without umbrella	• Subject clear/position is not; "underpromise, overdeliver"; "overpromise, underdeliver"; infer, two or more postions without unifying statement; abrupt ending • Multiple list without umbrella • Drift	• Bare bones; position clear; main point(s) clear and maintained; prompt dependent; launch into support w/o preview • Narrative event clear • May end abruptly • Overall, unifying idea can be inferred	• Position announced; points generally previewed; has a closing • Narrative event clear • Reactions stated may be uneven and/or general • Overall, unifying idea stated	• All main points are specified and maintained; effective closing • Narrative event clear • Reactions more specific

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IMAGE Writing Summary Rubric (continued)

Support/Elaboration—***Degree to which main point/elements are elaborated and/or explained by specific evidence and detailed reasons.***					
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
• No support; insufficient writing • Little or no elaboration • Confusing	• Support attempted; ambiguous/confusing; unrelated list; insufficient writing	• Some points elaborated; most general/ some questionable; may be a list of related specifics; sufficiency? • General elaboration	• Some second-order elaboration; some are general; sufficiency ok—but not much depth • Mix of general and specific elaboration	• Most points elaborated by second-order or more • Elaboration is specific • Some depth • Most major elements supported	• All major points elaborated with specific second-order support; balanced/ evenness • All major elements supported • Greater depth
Organization—***Degree to which logical flow of ideas and text plan are clear and connected.***					
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
• No plan; insufficient writing to ascertain maintenance • Ideas not related	• Attempted; plan can be inferrred; no evidence of paragraphing; confusion prevails; insufficient writing • Structure hard to infer	• Plan noticeable; inappropriate paragraphing; major digressions; sufficiency? • Some evident of structure	• Plan is evident; minor digressions; some cohesion and coherence from relating to topic • Narrative structure is evident	• Plan is clear; most points logically connected coherence and cohesion demonstrated; most points appropriately paragraphed • Generally strong paragraphs	• All points logically connected and signaled with transitions and/or other cohesive devices; all appropriately paragraphed; no digressions • Strong paragraphs • More than 1 sentence in opening & closing paragraphs
Mechanics—***Use of conventions of standard English. (spelling, capitalization, punctuation)***					
1			**2**		
• Many errors, cannot read, insufficient writing to ascertain maintenance	• Many major errors; confusion; insufficient writing	• Some major errors, many minor	• Minimally developed; few major errors; some minor, but meaning unimpaired	• A few minor errors, but no more than one major error	• No major errors, few or no minor errors

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Ideas for Instructional Assessment of Process Writing

Process writing involves multiple steps and requires students to reflect upon their writing at each stage. These ideas are intended to guide students through the writing process over an extended period of time.

Prewriting

- Brainstorm topics and select one
- Relate personal experiences about the topic
- Watch videos, listen to stories, or discuss illustrations related to the topic
- Design or complete a graphic organizer that matches the genre of the piece
- Collect information on the topic through interviews, research, and/or the internet
- Organize and outline information

Writing the First Draft

- Analyze information and summarize using sentences
- Write up notes in paragraph form
- Arrange paragraphs in a logical sequence
- Include introduction and conclusion
- Support ideas with graphics (charts, tables, pictures)

Editing

- Reread and self-assess (using a checklist)
- Peer assess for a specific purpose
- Incorporate teacher comments

Writing a Second Draft

- Rewrite sentences with more specific vocabulary
- Combine sentence fragments to produce sentences
- Combine short sentences to create compound or complex ones
- Use sentence variety
- Correct mechanical (punctuation and capitalization) errors
- Correct syntactical or grammatical errors
- Add transitions, where necessary

Editing

- Conference with a teacher
- Conference with a mentor
- Share with a family member

Publishing

- Rework the piece based on feedback from editors
- Produce the final product
- Reflect on how you have grown as a writer

Procedures for Planning, Collecting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Information on the IMAGE Writing Summary Rubric

Planning

1. Familiarize students with different kinds or genres of writing and have them write often for a variety of purposes and audiences. Within each genre, guide students to select a topic of personal interest using real life situations.

2. Stimulate writing where students explore answers to questions, issues, or problems they have raised. Use pictures, photographs, and charts to enhance writing production.

3. Encourage students to engage in an extended writing process that entails prewriting, first draft, second draft, first edit, peer or self-review, and publication. Plan for multiple time slots for students to accomplish this task.

4. When feasible, use computers for investigating and writing. Have students access the Internet to research a question or topic. A digital portfolio, where students store their writing on a personal disk throughout the year, can be created and maintained.

5. Use graphic organizers as a way of having students arrange their thoughts and ideas during the prewriting phase. Match the type of organizer with the type of writing to be generated; for example, a Venn diagram depicts comparison/contrast, a T-chart illustrates cause/effect, and a semantic web describes attributes.

6. Simplify the language of the rubric prior to introducing it to the students, one component at a time, over a period of months.

Collecting

7. Make sure students keep each phase of their process writing in addition to the published final form. Classroom assessment entails both the process and product of student work. Have students maintain writing samples scored with the rubric in chronological order, including student reflections on their writing, the Self-Assessment Checklist, process pieces, and those produced from on-demand assessments

8. To augment classroom assessment, have students practice for the state writing assessment. Replicate the conditions for administering the test, where students are required to produce an on-demand writing sample.

Analyzing

9. Match the students' work against each component of the rubric. Find the elements of the students' writing that correspond to the stated criteria to determine their level of performance.

10. Have students discuss and apply the modified criteria against their writing through peer and/or self-assessment.

11. At the end of the year, use the Student Writing Profile to categorize student scores by genre. Compare results for students' descriptive, narrative, persuasive, and expository writing.

Interpreting

12. Each year, make a summary sheet of the completed products with a Table of Contents. Determine overall student progress in writing and note improvement in the areas that correspond to the components of the rubric.

13. Consider having student/teacher conferences to compare results of student self-assessment with that of the instructor. Have students show evidence in their writing of the presence of specific criteria in the rubric.

14. Compare a student's classroom results in writing with those from the IMAGE, the state assessment. Use the student data to plan instruction and to provide feedback to teachers and students. The information gained from the varied assessment contexts will enhance the overall understanding of second language students' writing.

Writing Sample

Context: This student sample is from the pilot version of the Illinois Content-based Exemplar: "Immigration Stories."

The Long way to the United States

I am came to united States. My mom is crying. but my sisters I am not crying and my father is not crying. We are leaving Multan

I am stay of frank fort but I am not going to the out side. one man is and one has vacume for the Air Planes

I am stay for the New York one man is is and he is my father inter view and he sad Your green card came 3 months ago.

I am come for Chicago Air Port My ant uncle and kazn his come for the Air Port of reseve me and My family. and I am going home.

My mom and dad uncle me come to the home and telephon to Pakistan and I am sleeping. to the Bed.

My dad's job easy My Mom's job hard.

the ten days ago I am come for school. First day I fell bad Seacand day I feel good.

The Pakistani school is good but the kids are playing in Pakistan school not reading not writing. Pakistan school has no Art, no Music, No gym, and no lunch. I start school at 8:00 clock and come home at 12:00 clock.

Analysis of a Written Language Sample

Method of Assessment: As part of the unit of study, this student chose to write a book. The author wrote each paragraph of this narrative on a separate page below pictures he drew about his own immigration experience.
Rubric: *IMAGE* Writing Summary Rubric

WRITING Level of Language Proficiency

Language Production: Score Level 3
Criteria: Simple sentences; some expanded sentences may be attempted. Limited or repetitive sentence patterns produced. Some word order errors. Some use of accurate grammar. Frequent substitutions and omissions of words. Word choice predominantly non-specific and/or repetitious. Some meaning may be obscured. Some words from the native language may be present.

Sentence patterns are mostly short and simple, with some expanded sentences, including those in the last paragraph. There are frequent substitutions and omissions, such as the use of "of" and "for" in the place of "in" and "to," and the omissions of "and" and "is." Word order is reversed in "he is my father interview." Word choice is predominantly non-specific. It is necessary to reread some of the passages in order to get the meaning. Paragraph two is an example, where the student apparently is telling of a stop in Frankfurt where he did not get off the plane, but watched the airline personnel clean the inside of the plane.

Focus: Score Level 4
Criteria: Bare bones. Narrative event clear. Reactions may be unstated. May end abruptly.

The student provides a focusing statement about coming to the United States and develops that in the following paragraphs. He gives reactions about leaving his home country and tells us his feelings about his first days in school. He ends without closure.

Support/Elaboration: Score Level 3
Criteria: Some points elaborated; most general/some questionable; may be a list of related specifics. Paper may lack sufficiency to demonstrate developed support/elaboration.

The author mostly recites events and keeps moving with little explanation. The reactions in paragraph one help. The elaboration in paragraphs two and three are questionable, mostly because of the obscured meaning. In the last paragraph, the author gives support for students "playing" in Pakistan by saying they don't read and write. The rest of the paragraph could be elaboration if there were a unifying statement about schools in the two places being different, but it is more of a list as it is.

Organization: Score Level 3
Criteria: Narrative structure noticeable, but must be inferred. May be inappropriate paragraphing. May include major digressions. May lack sufficiency.

The structure follows chronological order. The lack of transitions make it very choppy. There is no sense of paragraphing.

Conventions: Score Level 2
Criteria: Spelling, capitalization and punctuation. Many major errors. Numbers of errors overcome length of piece and/or the errors impair meaning.

Inconsistent use of capitalization and periods at the end of sentences. Correct use of apostrophes. Spelling errors do not affect meaning.

IMAGE Writing Summary Rubric: Self-Assessment Checklist

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Writing Topic: _____
Teacher: _____ _____

Read the paper you have written one more time. Here are the components of writing on which you will be assessed. For each question, check the Yes or No box.

Language Production

❑ Yes ❑ No 1. I carefully choose the words to describe what I want to say.
❑ Yes ❑ No 2. My sentences are different lengths; some are short and some are long.
❑ Yes ❑ No 3. My sentences do not all start the same way.
❑ Yes ❑ No 4. Sometimes I translate from another language when I write.

Focus

❑ Yes ❑ No 5. My paper has a clear main idea.
❑ Yes ❑ No 6. I write about the same topic throughout the paper.
❑ Yes ❑ No 7. I end my paper with a conclusion.

Support/Elaboration

❑ Yes ❑ No 8. I expand upon my main idea with examples.
❑ Yes ❑ No 9. I use details to offer evidence and reasons for the main idea.

Organization

❑ Yes ❑ No 10. I have thought about what I am going to write.
❑ Yes ❑ No 11. I have used a planning sheet to organize what I am going to say.
❑ Yes ❑ No 12. I begin my paper with an introduction and end it with a summary.
❑ Yes ❑ No 13. My sentences go together to form paragraphs.
❑ Yes ❑ No 14. I use transition words to connect my ideas.

Mechanics

❑ Yes ❑ No 15. I have checked for spelling.
❑ Yes ❑ No 16. I have used correct capitalization and punctuation (commas, periods, apostrophes, quotation marks).

Student Writing Profile Based on the *IMAGE* Writing Summary Rubric

Student: _____ Year: _____
Grade Level: _____
Teacher: _____

For each writing sample, transfer the level attained on each of the five components of the rubric and sum the component scores to obtain a total score. There are sufficient columns to collect this information on a monthly basis.

Date:										
Genre: *										
Language Production (1-6)										
Focus (1-6)										
Support/Elaboration (1-6)										
Organization (1-6)										
Mechanics (1-2)										
Total Score	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Genre: *

Descriptive = D
Narrative = N
Persuasive = P
Expository = E

Cautions in the Use of the *IMAGE* Writing Summary Rubric and Suggestions on How to Avoid Pitfalls

Cautions	Suggestions
1. The rubric is designed to document student writing at grade 3 and beyond. At this time, students are more mature and the rubric's components reflect developmentally appropriate practices.	1. Have young children experiment with different forms of writing. Be aware of the parameters of the rubric and strive to gradually incorporate its components into writing instruction.
2. The rubric is intended for students who have surpassed the earliest stages of second language acquisition. Sufficient amount of writing needs to be generated in order to exhibit a plan and sustain a focus.	2. Provide plenty of opportunities for students to explore writing, allowing writing in L2 to emerge naturally. For ESL/bilingual students, the rubric may be used for writing assessment in the first language for screening purposes or monitoring L1 writing development.
3. The rubric corresponds to the assessment of descriptive, narrative, persuasive, and expository writing; other forms of writing do not apply.	3. Sometimes writing centers on creativity and imagination. Sometimes, students express themselves through poetry, drama, and song. Sometimes, it may be appropriate to write a note, a memo, or an outline. These forms of writing should complement those assessed with this rubric.
4. The one-page rubric gives teachers a general reference tool; however, some components (focus, support/elaboration, and organization) have more expanded criteria.	4. Students and teachers new to the rubric can find more detailed information in *Write On! Illinois* (ISBE, 1994).

C. Writing Rubrics

2. Composition Profile

Overview

This focused-analytic scale describes five components of writing (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics) along four ranges of performance. Originally developed by Jacobs et al. (1981) for university ESL students, the profile has undergone modification (Hamayan, Kwiat, & Perlman, 1985; Wormuth & Hughey, 1988) to include elementary and secondary students. The rubric is be used for assessment of students' writing , from first draft to final form.

Theoretical Background for the Scale

It is assumed that a global factor underlies language competence and is fundamental to all aspects of language (Oller, 1979). In the case of writing, this general factor may represent the learner's ability to process discourse; that is, to sequence and organize elements for a particular communicative purpose. Ultimately, a composing task should challenge this general language proficiency factor and give students the opportunity to integrate their knowledge of the different facets of writing.

Guidelines for Use

The scale consists of a 100-point maximum score; therefore, this rubric is helpful in settings in which teachers and students rely on traditional grading procedures. It has many potential uses, such as determining, in part, eligibility requirements for placement, measuring growth at the completion of an instructional sequence, or having students reflect upon themselves as writers. The primary goal, however, is to provide useful information about a learner's ability to communicate in writing (Jacobs, et. al., 1981). Although originally designed for expository and persuasive pieces, with its modifications, the scale may be applied to any genre of writing.

The five components are presented along four levels of performance. A numerical range for each level allows flexibility in scoring and more precise documentation of student growth in writing over time. Some of the components, such as Organization and Mechanics, correspond with those of the *IMAGE* Writing Summary Rubric. Thus, the two rubrics may both be used to produce a more comprehensive understanding of a student's written language proficiency or to confirm results.

Composition Profile for Writing Samples*

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Writing Topic: _____
Teacher: _____ Language: _____

Based on the student's writing, determine the score for each component. Add the subscores for a total score.

Language Component	Champion	Contender	Competitor	Challenger	SCORE
Scoring Range	**30-27**	**26-22**	**21-17**	**16-13**	
Content	Suits audience/purpose, one idea expressed, specific development, relevant to topic, creative	One idea loosely expressed, some specific development, mostly relevant to topic	Non-specific statement, incomplete development, little relevance	Not related, no clear development	☐
Scoring Range	**20-18**	**17-14**	**13-10**	**9-7**	
Organization	Effective lead/topic sentence, logical order (time-space-importance), effective connecting/transitional words, conclusion	Adequate lead/topic sentence, logical, but incomplete order, some connecting/transitional words, sketchy conclusion	Weak or no lead topic sentence, illogical order, no connecting/transitional words, weak or no conclusion	No main idea, no organization	☐
Scoring Range	**20-18**	**17-14**	**13-10**	**9-7**	
Vocabulary	Correct word forms, meaning clear, effective word choice/description/figurative language	Mostly correct word forms, meaning understandable, adequate word choice, some description/figurative language	Many incorrect word forms, meaning obscure, some variety in word choice, little description/figurative language	Limited word choice, little or no meaning	☐
Scoring Range	**25-22**	**21-18**	**17-11**	**10-5**	
Language Use	Sentence variety, complete sentences, correct verb tenses, word order, agreement	Simple sentences, mostly complete sentences, several errors in verb tense, word order, agreement, articles, negatives, run-ons	Few complete sentences, inconsistent verb tense, word order, agreement, articles, negatives, run-ons	Largely phrases, random verb tense, word order, agreement, articles, negatives	☐
Scoring Range	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	
Mechanics	Mastery of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation	Occasional errors in spelling, capitalization, and use of commas, periods, and apostrophes	Frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, and use of commas, periods, and apostrophes	Dominated by errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation	☐
				TOTAL SCORE	0

Genre: Descriptive____
Expository_____
Narrative_____
Persuasive____
Poetry/Rap____

*Adapted from Wormuth and Hughey (1988).

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Procedures for Planning, Collecting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Information on the Composition Profile

Planning

1. Think about the kinds of writing students will be expected to produce. Make sure that if the teacher is selecting the topic, it is one in which the students are knowledgeable, broad enough to encompass multiple perspectives, varied levels of proficiency, and diverse cultural backgrounds.

2. Within a given topic, allow students choices so that they may express themselves from their own experiential bases. In planning, students may pursue their personal interests, or choose among those suggested by the teacher.

Collecting

3. Share the rubric and the criteria with the students. Make sure that the students are informed of the writing components and have seen student samples on what and how they are to be assessed.

4. Inform the students of their time frame for writing. For example, process writing entails multiple steps extended over a period of time, whereas a timed first draft requires less preparation.

Analyzing Information

5. Read each composition twice. The first time is to form an overall impression of whether the writer has delivered a clear message. The second time is to focus on the five specific components of writing outlined in the rubric.

6. Score each component based on its given range and the extent to which the criteria have been met. The subscores from each component are then added from the five scales to reach a total score.

7. Use samples of student work that exemplify the midrange for each level as scoring guides for teachers and students.

8. Validate the numerical score with qualitative information supplied through peer, teacher, or self-assessment.

Interpreting Information

9. Report results by centering on how the student did in relation to the rubric's criteria rather than the score received. For students and parents who are familiar with traditional grading procedures, but may be unaccustomed to a rubric, the Composition Profile offers an opportunity for different audiences to understand how meaning can be attached to a score or a grade.

10. Encourage students to create a writing portfolio with their compositions, rubrics, and peer/teacher/self-assessment forms. While it is most practical for teachers with large numbers of students to record only the total score, students could easily maintain a record of their subscores (Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language Use, and Mechanics) over a semester or school year. A Student Summary Sheet is included for student or teacher use.

Writing Sample

Context: The student was informed ahead of time that this entry was to be used for assessment. It is one piece of information the teacher collects for monitoring student progress.

April 18, 1989

The night is getting fatal. Yesterday, I had a dream, it was scared. I can't think about my dream but I'm sure that it makes wake me up every minutes. If the curtain is opened, it feels like someone is weaving even he or she smiles at me. I have to close the curtain so I don't have see them. When I was doing my homework. I saw something was in the back side. It was from the closet. It was just bunch of hanging clothes. If I'm tired there's no scared things because I fall in sleep. But when do my homework or study I get scared. Maybe I have seen a lot of scared movies like "Night Mare". Next time I'll watch comedy programs.

Analysis of a Written Language Sample

Method of Assessment: Journal Entry
Rubric: Composition Profile

WRITING Level of Language Proficiency

Content Score: 27 (Champion)
Criteria: Suits audience/purpose; one idea expressed; specific development, relevant to topic; creative.

The topic sentence introduces the tone of the piece that is maintained throughout the sample. The audience becomes aware of the issue of a nightmare-ridden child who is scared at night early in the sample. This main idea is further developed and elaborated with little straying from the topic. Creativity is introduced through the author's hypothesizing about what provokes her nightmares.

Organization Score: 17 (Contender)
Criteria: Adequate lead/topic sentence; logical but incomplete order; some connecting/transitional words; sketchy conclusion.

At the top end of the Contender range, all elements of organization are in place. It is the vocabulary choice in the lead sentence, "fatal," that obscures the meaning, which makes it an "adequate" rather than "effective" beginning. The order is logical; completeness is sketchy due to the weaving of different aspects of time (both past and present) within the paragraph. The conclusion is precise, not sketchy.

Vocabulary Score: 15 (Contender)
Criteria: Mostly correct word forms; meaning understandable; adequate word choice, some descriptive/figurative language.

For the most part, word forms are correct. It appears the writer struggles with the adjective "scary," consistently choosing "scared" instead. Meaning is largely understandable but not crystal clear due to occasional improper word choice. The sample definitely has some descriptive language, such as the "bunch of hanging clothes" in the closet and a "scared movie like Night Mare."

Language Use Score: 22 (Champion)
Criteria: Sentence variety; complete sentences; correct verb tenses; word order agreement.

The variety and completeness of sentences, including simple, compound, and complex ones, earns this sample a Champion level in the area of Language Use. The writer is moving toward mastery of several verb tenses (present, present perfect, past, and future). Word order is interrupted by occasional omission of words; however, generally the writer displays control over syntactic structures.

Mechanics Score: 5 (Champion)
Criteria: Mastery of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

All elements that constitute Mechanics are at a mastery level. A few commas are missing after conditional phrases "If the curtain is opened" and "If I'm tired" are two examples. There are no errors in capitalization and all uses of apostrophes are correct.

Writing Total Score: 86

The Composition Profile: Peer, Teacher, or Self-Assessment of Student Writing

Student: _____ Date: _____
Grade Level: _____ Writing Topic: _____
Teacher: _____ Person Rating This Paper: _____

Peer, teacher, and/or self-reflection may be incorporated into assessment along with the rubric and a student's piece of writing. This form offers students an opportunity for feedback from teachers or peers or an opportunity to self-reflect on specific components of their writing.

Content
How would you rate the presence and development of the main idea in this piece? Why? _____

Organization
How would you rate the order in which the ideas are presented? Why?

Vocabulary
How would you rate the choice of words to communicate your ideas? Why? _____

Language Use
How would you rate the kinds of sentences you used ? Why? _____

Mechanics
How would you rate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation? Why? _____

Overall Writing
How would you rate this piece as a whole? Why? _____

Student Summary Sheet for Composition Profile

This form provides a record of a student's writing over time. It is to be used by students for self-assessment, their classmates for peer assessment, and/or by teachers. The descriptions in the Composition Profile form the basis for rating each component of the composition.

Student: _____ Year: _____
Grade Level: _____
Teacher: _____

Composition Number:	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
Date:								
Content Score (13-30)								
Organization Score (7-20)								
Vocabulary Score (7-20)								
Language Use Score (5-25)								
Mechanics Score (2-5)								
Total Score (100)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Student Summary Sheet for the Composition Profile

Date:	Title of Composition and Genre:	Rated by: (Circle)
1. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher
2. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher
3. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher
4. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher
5. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher
6. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher
7. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher
8. _____	_____	Self Peer Teacher

Cautions in Use of the Composition Profile and Suggestions on How to Avoid Pitfalls

Cautions	Suggestions
1. The components of the Composition Profile do not account for the more developed aspects of writing.	1. Depending on the group of students, consider beginning direct writing assessment with the Composition Profile; gradually, as the students become more proficient, introduce the *IMAGE* Writing Rubric. Depending on the purpose of the writing task, both rubrics can be used with the students.
2. Scoring for each component is expressed as a range; it may not accurately reflect what is emphasized in your instructional program. For example, a maximum Mechanics score is 5 while a maximum Content score is six times as great (30).	2. Adjust the scoring bands to match your instructional foci. If you choose to use the 100 point system, have a rationale for assigning the range of points to each component and the specific point values given to student work.
3. It may be difficult for the students to address all five components simultaneously in their writing.	3. Introduce the components one at a time. Have the students become thoroughly familiar with the criteria of the featured component. Match the criteria to actual writing samples so the students will have a guide and models of writing.

Part III: Reference Material

Glossary of Instructional Assessment Terms

Academic language proficiency—the competencies students exhibit in oral and written language based on curricular concepts and content area instruction.

Analytic scale—separate scores or levels with specified criteria, each based on a different component of what is being measured, expressed in a rubric.

Assessment—a systematic cycle of planning, collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting information on student performance, based on various sources of evidence over time.

Classroom assessment—the design, collection, analysis, and reporting of information about students by teachers based on curriculum and instruction.

Evaluation—the assignment of a judgment or value based on reliable and valid assessment information.

Holistic scale—a single, integrated score or level on a rubric, with specified criteria, that summarizes a student's performance.

Inter-rater agreement—in performance assessment, a form of reliability in which the percent of matched scores given by independent raters on student performance is calculated.

L1—the first language a person acquires.

L2—an additional or second language a person acquires.

Language acquisition—a developmental process whereby individuals pass through a series of predictable stages, gaining increased proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Language form—the grammatical and lexical elements of a language.

Language function—the uses or purposes of language; a description of what a student does to communicate (such as apologize, explain, or persuade).

Language proficiency—the linguistic knowledge and competencies students exhibit in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Matrix—a type of rubric with rows (levels or competencies) and columns (components of a construct) that form separate cells with specified criteria to be used in the interpretation of assessment tasks and activities.

Miscue analysis—a type of individual oral reading assessment that provides information on a student's ability to decode, use strategies, and comprehend text.

Performance assessment—tasks that require students to construct a response, create a product, or demonstrate applications of knowledge which are interpreted using criteria specified in a rubric.

Reading response log—an inventory kept by students of entries indicating the authors, types (genres), number of pages completed, and personal reactions to stories or books.

Reliability—the extent to which an assessment measure and, in the case of performance tasks, the persons interpreting the assessment, produce consistent results.

Rubric—a scale with descriptive criteria at each score point or level used in assessment to document student performance.

Running Record—a form of miscue analysis in which teachers record in detail what students do when reading aloud.

Self-assessment—a student's reflection and analysis of his or her own work, including the processes and strategies used in creating the final product, either at its completion or compared with former work.

Social language proficiency—the competencies students exhibit in oral and written language that reflect their global experiences inside and out of school.

Task—a complex instructional assessment activity that invites varied responses to a challenging question, issue, or problem.

Think-Aloud—an instructional approach whereby students orally describe their thinking processes while reading or problem solving.

Total Physical Response—an instructional approach whereby students respond kinesthetically to oral or written commands, directions, or instructions.

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